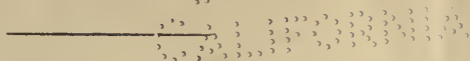


PEKINESE RHYMES

CHINESE FOLKLORE



PEKINESE RHYMES

FIRST COLLECTED AND EDITED WITH

NOTES AND TRANSLATION

BY

BARON GUIDO VITALE

CHINESE SECRETARY TO THE ITALIAN LEGATION.



PEKING.

PEI-T'ANG PRESS

1896.

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TO
PROFESSOR LODOVICO NOCENTINI
IN
SIGN OF ESTEEM AND FRIENDSHIP



PREFACE

I bring for the first time to light a collection of Pekinese children-rhymes with the conviction that the reader may gather from the lecture these benefits.

1°. The acquirement of a small treasure of words and phrases hardly to be met with elsewhere.

2°. A clearer insight into scenes and details of chinese common life.

3°. The notion that some true poetry may be found in chinese popular songs.

These rhymes have no known authors; some of them are perhaps composed by mothers watching at children's bedside, others may be composed by naughty school-boys when the teacher is having his nap over a page of the great philosopher. At all events they are like wild flowers which spring up nobody knows how and when and fade and die in the same way.

The trouble in collecting them was far greater than I had thought. "Tabood" as we are in Peking, where could I go myself to hear the rhymes and note them down?

Then I had recourse to my teacher, but as he thinks to be a literary man, he grew quite indignant at my proposal, and assured and pledged that no such rubbish had ever existed in China. However as I happened (of course by chance) to take out of my drawer some dollars, and place them beneath his reach, he suddenly abated his furors and mumbled that "perhaps I was not mistaken and that of course he would by every possible mean try to get what I wanted".

And I shall say to his justice that he kept his word and the dollars. But when he had collected forty or so, his stock was quite exhausted and I had to look for other helps.

In summer time residing in temples in the neighbourhood of Peking I had large chance of intercourse with the people and could increase my stock of rhymes. I was furthermore able to improve the former texts and to reprove all those which being not matched by oral testimony were probably spurious.

After the work of collection, came the work of explanation and translation which was not always easy. The people who spoke the words often were not able to give me light on the difficult points. When pressed by me they suggested something and I picked up what looked more truthlike and reasonable; never did I force or prefer views of my own.

Somebody will object to my statement that sparkles of true poetry are to be found in this book. That will very naturally happen to all those who are entirely foreign to the chinese world. Several rhymes (however few in proportion to the bulk of the book)⁽¹⁾ are simple and touching and may be "poetry" for those who have even a slight knowledge of chinese joys and sorrows.

I shall draw also the reader's attention to the system of versification followed in these rhymes. Composed as they are by illiterate people who have no notion of written language, they show a system of versification analogous to that of many European countries, and almost completely agreeing with the rules

(1) 3.9.10.11.13.15.23.32.43.44.53.54.55.60.91.117.123.125.

of the Italian poetry. A new national poetry could perhaps spring up based on these rhythms and on the true feelings of the people.

I took every pain to collect the most I could, yet the work could be by far richer than it is. Those who live in freer intercourse with the people could easily add numerous and fine samples of this uncultivated poetry. I would be extremely pleased if anyone would either furnish to me new materials, or would himself undertake the work of a new collection of rhymes.

Any critic, advise or literary contribution will be gratefully received by the author.

I am glad to be able to express here my deep feelings of gratitude to Mr. A. M. C. Raab of the British Legation, who kindly undertook the revision of almost the whole manuscript and to Mr. Krebs of the German Legation who kindly helped me in correcting the proofs.

BARON GUIDO VITALE

Italian Legation.

Peking. 30th September 1896.



INDEX.

Chang ¹ ta ¹ sao ³	Pag. 23	張大嫂
Che ⁴ ko ⁴ jen ² sheng ¹ lai ²	192	這個人生來性兒急
Cheng ¹ yüe ⁴ li ³ cheng ¹ yüe ⁴ cheng ¹	195	正月裏正月正
Chi ¹ tsao ⁴ chi ¹ tsao ⁴	170	祭竈祭竈新年來到
Chiao ¹ ni ² pan ⁴ 'r	169	膠泥辦兒
Chie ¹ cho ch'iang ² 'eur	165	隔着牆兒扔切糕
Chih ⁴ chi ¹ ling ²	100	雉鷄翎
Chin ¹ ku ¹ lu ¹ pang ⁴	34	金轆轤棒
Ch'in ² shih ³ huang ²	184	秦始皇
Ching ¹ t'iao ² kun ¹ 'r	88	荆條棍兒
Ch'iung ² t'ai ⁴ t'ai ⁴ 'r	193	窮太太兒
Ch'o ³ ch'o ³	35	扯扯
Ch'u ¹ la men ²	52	出了門兒
Ch'u ¹ la men ² 'r hao ³ sang ⁴ ch'i ⁴	145	出了門兒好喪氣
Ch'u ¹ i ¹ ch'u ¹ eur ⁴ ch'u ¹ san ¹ ssu ⁴	207	初一初二初三四兒
Ch'ü ³ hsi ² fu ⁴ 'r ti	90	娶媳婦兒的
Chui ¹ pang ¹ tzu ³ 'r	189	錐幫子兒
Fan ¹ ping ³ lao ⁴ ping ³	78	翻餅烙餅
Feng ¹ lai ² la	103	風來咯
Han ² ya ¹ 'r han ² ya ¹ 'r kuo ⁴	24	寒鴉兒寒鴉兒過
Hao ² jo ⁴ t'ien ¹ 'r	116	好熱天兒
Hao ¹ tzu teng ¹	133	蒿子燈
Hei ¹ lao ³ p'ouo ² 'r	125	黑老婆兒
Ho ² shang ⁴ ho ² shang ⁴ iao ² ling ² tang ⁴	67	和尚和尚搖鈴鐺

Hou ⁴ ti ³ 'r hsie ²	80	厚底兒鞋
Hu ¹ hu ¹	95	糊糊
Hua ¹ hung ² liou ³ lu ⁴ hsien ⁴ 'r	64	花紅柳綠線兒
Huai ² shu ⁴ huai ²	31	槐樹槐
Huang ² kou ³ huang ² kou ³	17	黃狗黃狗你看家
Huang ² ch'eng ² ken ¹ 'r	128	黃城根兒
Huang ² tou ⁴ li ⁴ 'r	175	黃豆粒兒
Hung ² to ² li	201	紅得哩
Hung ² hu ² lu ²	84	紅葫蘆
Hsi ³ ch'iao ³ i ³ pa ¹ ch'ang ²	92	喜雀尾巴長
Hsi ³ 'r hsi ³ 'r ch'ih ¹ tou ⁴ fu ³	138	喜兒喜兒吃豆腐
Hsi ³ 'r hsi ³ 'r mai ³ tou ⁴ fu ³	139	喜兒喜兒買豆腐
Hsi ¹ hsi ¹ chiao ¹	185	蹊蹊蹊
Hsi ³ hua ¹ ch'ia ¹ lai ² tai ⁴ man ³ t'ou ²	188	喜花摺來戴滿頭
Hsi ³ 'r hsi ³ 'r	198	喜兒喜兒
Hsiang ¹ hsiang ¹ hao ¹ tzu	46	香香蒿子
Hsiang ¹ lu ² 'r	105	香爐兒
Hsiao ³ t'u ¹ 'r	10	小禿兒
Hsiao ³ pai ² ts'ai ⁴	22	小白菜兒
Hsiao ³ eur ⁴ ko ¹	32	小二哥
Hsiao ³ u ³ 'r	42	小五兒
Hsiao ³ hsiao ³ tzu	44	小小子
Hsiao ³ hui ² hui ² 'r	68	小回回兒
Hsiao ³ t'u ¹ 'r	93	小禿兒
Hsiao ³ niu ¹ 'r	106	小妞兒
Hsiao ³ chiao ³ 'r niang ²	107	小腳兒娘
Hsiao ³ hsiao ³ tzu	113	小小子兒
Hsiao ³ hsiao ³ tzu	127	小小子兒

- Hsiao³ ch'in² chiao¹ 131 小秦椒兒
 Hsiao³ san¹ 'r t'a¹ ma¹ 134 小三兒他媽
 Hsiao³ hao⁴ tzu 135 小耗子兒
 Hsiao³ ta⁴ chie³ 142 小大姐
 Hsiao³ yüan² 'r 149 小元兒
 Hsiao³ san¹ 'r, hsiao³ san¹ 'r 164 小三兒 小三兒
 Hsiao³ t'ao² ch'i⁴ 179 小陶氣兒
 Hsiao³ ta⁴ chie³ 187 小大姐
 Hsiao³ hsiao³ tzu k'ai¹ p'u⁴ 'r 196 小小子開鋪兒
 Hsiao³ ku¹ niang² tsuo⁴ i¹ meng⁴ 196 小姑娘作一夢
 Hsiao³ p'ang⁴ hsiao³ tzu 204 小胖小子兒
 Hsiao³ p'ang⁴ ko¹ 219 小胖哥
 Hsin¹ ta³ i¹ pa³ ch'a² hu² 65 新打一把茶壺
 Hsin¹ ku¹ niang² shih² chi³ la 143 新姑娘十幾咯
 I¹ chin⁴ men² hsi³ ch'ung¹ ch'ung¹ 66 一進門兒喜冲冲
 I¹ ya¹ eur⁴ ya¹ 69 一呀二呀
 I¹ fu⁴ k'uang¹ 77 一副筐
 I¹ chin⁴ men² 'r hei¹ ku¹ lung¹
 tung² 147 一進門兒黑咕窿咚
 I¹ ko⁴ chien¹ 'r 176 一個毬兒
 Jih⁴ t'ou² ch'u¹ lai² i¹ tien³ hung² 25 日頭出來一點紅
 Kao¹ kao¹ shan¹ shang⁴ you³ i¹ chia¹ 45 高高山上有一家
 Kao¹ kao¹ shan¹ shang⁴ i¹ tsuo⁴
 hsiao³ miao⁴ 64 高高山上一座小廟
 Kao¹ kao¹ shan¹ shang⁴ i¹ luo⁴
 chuan¹ 79 高高山上一落磚
 Kao¹ kao¹ shan¹ shang⁴ i¹ k'o¹ hao¹ 104 高高山上一顆蒿
 Kao¹ kao¹ shan¹ shang⁴ i¹ tsuo⁴ lou² 108 高高山上一座樓

- Kao¹ kao¹ shan¹ shang⁴ i¹ k'o¹ ma² 116 高高山上一顆蕨
 Kao¹ kao¹ shan¹ shang⁴ iou³ ko⁴
 hsiao³ miao⁴ 119 高高山上有個小廟
 Kao¹ kao¹ shan¹ shang⁴ i¹ tsuo⁴ lou² 148 高高山上一座樓
 Kao¹ kao¹ shan¹ shang⁴ i¹ uo¹ chu¹ 190 高高山上一窩猪
 Kao¹ kao¹ shan¹ shang⁴ i¹ ko⁴ niu² 205 高高山上一個牛
 Ken¹ 'r ken¹ 'r 152 娘兒娘兒
 Ku⁴ pu⁴ to² i¹ shih² shuei⁴ chao² la 139 顧不得一時睡着
 Ku³ k'ao⁴ cho² ku³ lai² 199 鼓靠着鼓來
 Ku¹ tung¹ tung¹ 217 穀洞洞
 La¹ ta⁴ chū⁴ 1 拉大鋸
 La¹ la¹ ku³ ti¹ ch'o¹ san¹ ko¹ ko¹ 162 拉拉穀的車三哥哥
 Lan² tiē⁴ ch'ang³ 101 藍靛廠
 Lao³ t'ai⁴ t'ai⁴ chia⁴ mao¹ 130 老太太叫貓
 Li⁴ la ch'iu¹ lai² li⁴ la ch'iu¹ 40 立了秋來立了秋
 Li⁴ li⁴ li⁴ li⁴ chan⁴ 'r 123 立立立立站兒
 Liang³ chih¹ la⁴ 135 兩枝蠟
 Ling² lung² t'a³ 98 玲瓏塔
 Luo² kuo¹ tzu ch'iao² 55 羅鍋子橋
 Luo⁴ t'o² luo⁴ t'o² so⁴ so⁴ 110 駱駝駱駝嗟嗟
 Luo² kuo¹ 'r ch'iao² 124 羅鍋兒橋
 Ma² tzu³ ma² 12 麻子癩
 Ma² tzu³ kuei³ 137 麻子鬼
 Mai³ i¹ pao¹ 206 買一包
 Mei² mu⁴ 'r 97 煤糗兒
 Men² 'r ch'iao¹ ti pang¹ pang¹ 178 門兒敲的梆梆
 Miao⁴ li³ ti ho² shang⁴ la¹ ta⁴ suo³ 166 廟裏的和尙拉大鎖
 Miao⁴ men² tui⁴ miao⁴ men² 'r 191 廟門對廟門兒

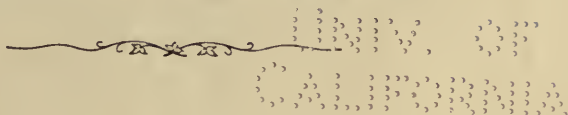
- Mie¹ mie¹ yang² 62 咩咩羊
 Muo⁴ li⁴ hua¹ 'r ti chang⁴ fu¹ 153 茉莉花兒的丈夫
 Nan² ching¹ ta⁴ liou³ shu⁴ 216 南京大柳樹
 Ni² ni² ni² ni² puo¹ puo¹ 47 泥泥泥泥餹餹
 Ni³ ma¹ ch'i¹ 111 你媽七
 Ni³ iao⁴ sha² ni³ iao⁴ sha² 208 你要奢你要奢
 Niao¹ niao¹ niao¹ 192 鳥鳥鳥
 Nien² nien² iou³ ko⁴ san¹ yüe⁴ san¹ 215 年年有個三月三
 Niu¹ 'r iao⁴ ch'ih¹ mien⁴ 49 妞兒要吃麵
 Pa¹ hsien¹ chuo¹ 'r 137 八仙棹兒
 Pai² t'a³ ssu⁴ 186 白塔寺
 Pien¹ p'ao⁴ i¹ hsiang³ pa⁴ chang¹
 k'ai² 209 鞭炮一响把張開
 P'ing² tso² men² la¹ ta⁴ kung¹ 155 平則門拉大弓
 San¹ 'r san¹ 'r 60 三兒三兒
 Sung¹ chih¹ 'r shu⁴ 173 松枝兒樹
 Sung¹ pai³ chih¹ 'r 176 松柏枝兒
 Sha¹ t'u³ ti⁴ 'r 9 沙土地兒
 Shang⁴ ku¹ lu⁴ t'ai² 2 上轆轤台
 Shih² liou⁴ hua¹ 'r ti chie³ 28 石榴花兒的姐
 Shih⁴ shui² p'ai⁴ uo³ ti men² 'r 194 是誰拍我的門兒
 Shou⁴ hsing¹ lao³ 'r fu² lu⁴ hsing¹ 219 壽星老兒福祿星
 Shu⁴ ye⁴ 'r ch'ing¹ 38 樹葉兒青
 Shu⁴ ye⁴ 'r hei¹ 78 樹葉兒黑
 Shui² ken¹ uo³ uan² 'r 14 誰跟我頑兒
 Shuei³ niu² 'r shuei³ niu² 'r 48 水牛兒水牛兒
 Shuo¹ k'ai¹ ch'uan² chiou⁴ k'ai¹
 ch'uan² 161 說開船就開船

- Ta¹ lien² 'r ta¹
 Ta¹ lien² 'r ta¹
 Ta³ hua¹ pa¹ chang³
 Ta³ luo² 'r shai¹
 Ta³ luo² 'r shai¹
 Ta⁴ t'u¹ tzu³ to² ping⁴
 Ta⁴ niang² tzu³ ho¹ chiou³
 Ta⁴ fan¹ ch'o¹
 Ta⁴ ko¹ ko¹ eur⁴ ko¹ ko¹
 Ta⁴ niang² eur⁴ niang² ts'ai¹
 T'ao² shu⁴ ye⁴ 'r chien¹
 Ti¹ ti¹ ti¹
 T'i⁴ teng¹ kun¹ 'r
 T'iao¹ shuei³ ti ko¹
 T'ien¹ huang² huang²
 T'ie³ ts'an² tou⁴
 Tou⁴ ya² ts'ai⁴
 T'ou² pien¹ hui¹
 T'u¹ tzu³ t'u¹
 T'u¹ t'u¹ ch'a³
 Tu³ li² 'r shu⁴
 Tung¹ yü⁴ miao⁴
 Tung¹ tung¹ tung¹
 Tsao⁴ uang² ye²
 Tzu³ pu⁴ tzu³
 Uo³ i¹ ko⁴ ta⁴ eur² tzu
 Uo³ eur² tzu shuei⁴ chiao⁴ la
 Uo³ ti¹ eur² uo³ ti¹ chiao¹
 53 搭連兒搭
 59 搭連兒搭
 72 打花巴掌
 76 打羅兒篩
 180 打羅兒篩
 36 大禿子得病
 57 大娘子喝酒
 63 大翻車
 194 大哥哥二哥哥
 202 大娘二娘猜
 412 桃樹葉兒尖
 471 滴滴滴
 27 剔燈棍兒
 7 挑水的哥
 241 天皇皇
 89 鐵蠶豆
 183 豆芽菜
 243 頭遍灰
 58 禿子禿
 96 禿禿鋪
 83 杜梨兒樹
 56 東嶽廟
 446 咚咚咚
 242 竈王爺
 459 紫不紫
 45 我一個大兒子
 46 我兒子睡覺了
 482 我的兒我的姣

Ya ¹ t'ou ² ya ¹	97	丫頭丫
Yang ² shu ⁴ ye ⁴ 'r	6	楊樹葉兒
Yang ² pa ¹ pa ¹ tan ⁴ 'r	118	羊巴巴蛋兒
Yang ³ huo ² chu ¹ ch'ih ¹ k'ou ³ jou ⁴	197	養活猪吃口肉
Ye ² ye ² pao ⁴ sun ¹ tzu	106	爺爺抱孫子
Yen ⁴ pien ¹ hu ²	129	簷蝙蝠
You ³ ko ⁴ niu ¹ 'r pu ⁴ hai ⁴ sao ⁴	121	有個妞兒不害羞
You ³ ko ⁴ hsiao ³ t'u ¹ 'r	122	有個小禿兒本姓高
You ³ pien ¹ 'r you ³ pien ¹ 'r	144	有邊兒有邊兒
Yüe ⁴ liang ⁴ ye ²	150	月亮爺
Yüe ⁴ liang ⁴ ye ²	172	月亮爺
Yüe ⁴ liang ⁴ ye ²	190	月亮爺



PEKINESE BABY-SONGS



I

拉 大 鋸
 扯 大 鋸
 鋸 木 頭
 蓋 房 子
 姥 姥 家
 娶 娘 子

搭 大 棚
 唱 大 戲
 接 姑 娘
 請 女 婿
 小 外 甥
 你 也 去

NOTES

Singing these words, the mother or any elder of the family takes the baby by the hands and pushes him for and backwards as if it was really the matter of drawing a saw. 姥姥家 *lao³ lao³ chia¹*, the family of the mother's mother. 娶娘子 *ch'ü³ niang² tzü*, goes to fetch the bride for her son, *niang²-tzü* is the name for a wife, and here it is used instead of 新姑娘 *hsin¹-ku¹-niang²*, the (real) term for a bride. 搭大棚 *ta¹-ta⁴-p'eng²*, they raise a large matshed. The chinese houses have not generally large rooms, therefore in marriage, death, anniversary, and other occasions in which many guests are to be invited,

an additional matshed is raised in the court-yard.

大戲 tā-hsī, a play performed in the matshed by hired actors, an amusement much liked by the Chinese, but which only rich people can afford to have in their houses.

接姑娘請女婿 chie' ku'-
xiang' ch'ing' nü' hsu', the grandmother with her family invites on this marriage occasion her married daughters and their husbands. 外甥 nai'-sheng', is the name by which a sister's son is designed.

TRANSLATION

(People) draw the saw — pull the saw — saw the wood — build rooms — the grandmother and her family go to fetch the bride — a large matshed is raised — in which a play is performed — and they come to take home the married daughters — and to invite their husbands — small nephew — do you want also to go?

II

上	轆	轆	台	
下	轆	轆	台	
張	家	媽	媽	倒茶來
茶	也	香		
酒	也	香		

十駝	八不	個動	駱	駝	駝	衣	裳
叫	麻	愣					
麻	愣	含	着	一	口	水	
噴	了	小	姐	花	褲	腿	
小	姐	小	姐	你	別	惱	
明	兒	後	兒	車	來	到	
甚	麼	車		車	白	馬	拉
紅	轂	轆	轎	個	俏	人	家
裏	頭	坐	着	銀	鼠	褂	
灰	鼠	皮	襖	小	針	兒	扎
對	子	荷	包	個	二	等	轄
解	南	來	了	兒	間	阿	煞
把	着	車	門	你	上	那	兒
阿	煞	阿	邊	兒	瞧	親	家
我	到	南	親	家	的	我	家
瞧	完	了	成	兒	奶	老	米
我	家	現	醇	就	四	茶	飯
達	子	醇	榔	夾	物	瓣	兒
安	南	檳	個	厭		兒	的
磬	你	這				老	包
						牙	

NOTES

軋 軋 台 *ku¹ lu¹ t'ai²*, a rounded stone placed
 Some times outside the outdoors to sit on. 麻
 愣 *ma²-leng⁴* is the dragon fly (*libellula virgo*); it ought

to be correctly written 螞螂 and pronounced ma¹-lang³, I have however preferred the more popular and incorrect form as the sounds and the tones of the characters correspond to the Pekinese pronunciation, and the correct form is popularly unknown. 含着 hen²-cho, holding something in the mouth without showing it. The correct pronunciation of the character 含 is han², as it is also pronounced in vulgar phrases as for instance 暗含着 an¹ han² cho, hiddenly, without showing, said sometimes of a meaning hidden in words which pretend not to say anything. 褲腿 k'u⁴ t'uei³, cloth-bands wrapped around the ankles of ladies with small feet. 轎車 chiao⁴ ch'o¹, sort of cart longer than the ordinary one, used only by the upper mandarin classes. 俏人家 ch'iao⁴ jen² chia¹, a beautiful woman. 灰鼠 huei¹-shu³, the grey squirrel. 皮襖 p'i²-ao³, chinese overcoat lined with fur. 銀鼠 yin²-shu³, the white squirrel. 對子 t'uei⁴-tzu, a pair; the numeral — one is wanting. 荷包 ho³-pao¹, a small side-pouch in which the chinese keep banknotes, or even betel-nuts. 小針兒 hsiao³-chen¹-eur, a small needle used by women to work flowers on a cloth. This working different from the embroidery is called 扎 cha¹. 轄 hsia¹, the character ought to be pronounced in the second tone, but here is pronounced in the first because it is only used to represent the Manchu word *hiyà* meaning a body-guard of the sovereign; this word is very often used in Peking instead of the chinese equivalent 侍衛 shih⁴-wei¹. 阿煞 a⁴-sha¹, two

characters which represent the Manchu word *asha* meaning one's elder brother's wife, and is used in the same complimentary way and in the same meaning as the chinese 嫂子 *sao³-tzü*. 達子餽餽 *ta²-tzü puo¹-puo¹*, tartar-cakes many of which keep yet their old Manchu names, and are largely used in Peking. 奶茶 *nai³-ch'a²*, "milk-tea". 安南檳榔 *an¹-nan²-ping¹-lang²*, Annamite betel-nuts. 夾四瓣兒 *chia¹-ssu⁴-pan⁴'r*, which are cut in four pieces. 硃 *ko⁴* character not mentioned in any dictionary; it means to stick in the teeth, and also to hinder, to hurt. 厭物兒 *yen⁴ u⁴'r*, despising term for a person who disgusts people; it could be translated "you worrying thing!" 包牙 *pao¹ ya²*, it is said of the front teeth when they protrude under the upper lip.

TRANSLATION

Goes up the sitting-stone — comes down from the sitting stone (!). The old lady Chang comes to pour tea — the tea is fragrant — the wine is fragrant — ten camels are loaden with clothes — they are unable to move on — and they call the dragon-fly — the dragon fly-with the mouth full of water — spurts the young lady's figured ankle-bands — young lady, young lady do not get cross — to-morrow or after to-morrow the cart shall arrive — what cart? — a chair-cart with red wheels, drawn by a white horse — and inside there sits a beautiful woman — who wears an over coat lined with grey squirrel

fur and a jacket lined with ermine fur — and has with her a pair of side-pouches with flowers worked on it by the small needle — then, comes from the south direction an Imperial body-guard of the second class — who leaning to the cart-door asks his sister-in-law — sister-in-law, sister-in law, where do you go? — “I am going towards South to pay a visit to my family” — “When you have already paid a visit to your family, come to my house. — I have at home ready-cooked old rice — tartar cakes and tea milk — but the Annamite betelnuts cut in four pieces — shall break the protruding old front teeth of you worrying thing!”

III

楊 樹 葉 兒
嘩 拉 拉
小 孩 兒 睡 覺 找 他 媽
乖 乖 寶 貝 兒 你 睡 罷
螞 虎 子 來 了 我 打 他

NOTES

楊樹 yang² shu⁴, the poplar (latin *populus*) this tree is in China very commonly seen in burial grounds. The Chinese say that its leaves stir even

without wind, and that the noise produced by their stirring, moves to sadness. 嘩拉拉 *hua' la' là'*, pronounced as one word, is imitative of the noise. This sad introduction is supposed to scare the boy and to get him sooner asleep. 乖乖 *kuai'-kuai'*, means to kiss as chinese mothers kiss their children in somewhat a different way than the Europeans. The same expression is used too to say: be quiet! don't be saucy! — probably the two meanings melt in one, as the second may simply be a promise of a kiss if the boy will be quiet. Another common form for the last meaning is adverbially formed so, 乖乖兒的 *kuai' kuai' r ti*. 螞虎子 *ma' hu³ tzü*, a phantastic monstrous creature spoken of and called every time it is thought proper to scare a baby.

TRANSLATION

The poplar leaves — are stirring — the baby is about to sleep and looks for his mother — be a good boy, my treasure, get asleep — if the bogie comes, I'll beat him.

IV

挑 水 的 哥
聽 着 我 說
南 河 沿 兒

有 你 的 窩
晴 天 晒 蓋 子
陰 天 把 脖 兒 縮

NOTES

These words are addressed by the Chinese boys to the water-carriers who are generally people of the Shantung province. As no water-ways of any kind exist in Peking, a great many of these fellows take the water from the wells into the houses. Their bad pronunciation, and their awkward manners delight extremely the Peking cockneys. The boys have therefore composed for their benefit this special song, which they hum at their back, and whose general aim is to define them as turtles. The word turtle in China is used for one of the most direct insults, as this animal is phantastically impeached of an unnatural crime. The insult is however so largely used that people are not shocked by it. 哥 *ko'* means elder brother, but here is used in the meaning of man, fellow in the same way as the Russians use the word *brat* (Latin *frater*). 窩 *uo'* means not only a nest but also a den, a hole. 晒蓋子 *shai' kai'-tzü*, to dry the shell in the sun, as turtles do. 縮 *suo'*, to withdraw one's head, to retreat. This last phrase is allusive to the fact that the water-carriers do not go out when it rains, as the turtles do too.

TRANSLATION

Water carrying fellow — hear what I say — on the bank of the south river — is your hole — when the weather is fine, you dry out your shell — and when it is bad weather then you draw in your neck.

V

沙土地兒
跑白馬
一跑跑到丈人家
大舅兒望裏讓
小舅兒望裏拉
隔着竹簾兒看見他
銀盤大臉黑頭髮
月白緞子棉襖銀疙疸

NOTES

沙土地兒 *sha' t'u³ ti''r*, a sandy plain ground as outside the wall between the Manchu and the Chinese town in Peking. 丈人 *chang'-jen*, name given to one's wife or bride's father. 大舅兒 *ta'-chiou''r*, one's wife's elder brother. 小舅兒 *hsiao³ chiou''r*, one's wife's younger brother. For 他 is here to be understood the bride whom the young man succeeds in spying through the curtain. 銀盤大

臉 yin² p'an² ta⁴ lien³, a big face as white as a silver tray. 月白 yüe⁴ pai², "moon white" means a light blue. 疙疸 read ko¹-ta¹ or more vulgarly ka¹-ta¹, here means a metal button, it may also mean pimples and has other different shades of meanings.

TRANSLATION

On the sandy plain — gallops a white horse — galloping gets to the (horseman's) future father-in-law's house — his elder brother-in-law invites him to come in — his younger brother-in-law pulls him in — through the bamboo-curtain he has seen her — her large face as white as a silver-tray and her black hair — and her cotton overcoat of light azure colour with silver buttons.

VI

小 禿 兒
 咧 咧 咧
 南 邊 兒 打 水 是 你 爹
 你 爹 戴 着 紅 纓 帽
 你 媽 穿 着 乍 板 兒 鞋
 走 一 步
 踢 拉 拉
 十 個 脚 指 頭 露 着 三

NOTES

The chinese boys generally as far as three years old have their hair shaven; therefore a common nickname for a boy is 禿兒 t'u'r, meaning a bald-headed. 咧咧咧 lie'-lie'-lie', is imitative of the sound of weeping. The boy weeps and to quiet him the song is sung to him. 打水 ta³ shuei³, to draw water from a well, by a rope and a bucket. 紅纓子 hung² ing¹ tzü, Red silk twists fixed round the top of a chinese official hat. 乍板兒鞋 cha⁴ pan³'r hsie², old shoes with no heels; they are so called because the noise the sole produces slapping on the ground is like the sound of a chinese musical instrument called 乍板兒 cha⁴ pan³'r, consisting in two small bamboo tablets strung together, which are shaken by the fingers in a similar manner to the spanish and italian castanets 蹋拉拉 t'a' la' la', imitates the slapping of the shoe sole on the ground. 三 san¹ is here (as very often in vulgar language) pronounced sa¹, in order to rhyme with the precedent verse who ends with 拉.

TRANSLATION

Small bald-headed — here he is weeping! — to the South side it's your father who draws water from the well — your father wears an official hat with red silk twists on it — and your mother wears on

her feet old shoes with no heels — as she advances a step — it sounds t'alalà — and of her ten toes three peep out of her shoes.

VII

痲子痲
上樹爬
狗又咬
人又拿
嚇的痲子摔了個痲跟頭
痲大錢
買了個痲燒餅
痲子吃
痲子看
痲子打架痲子勸
痲衙役
拿板子
單打痲子的痲腿子

NOTES

This song is profusedly interspersed with the character 痲 *ma*² whose meaning is “small pox.” This disease is so common in China that very often children who have been sick with it and keep marks

on their faces are familiarly called 麻子 *ma²-tzŭ*. Furthermore the word is used in other relative meanings. Here throughout these words, it is impossible to translate it always, as the repetition is done for the sake of playing on the word. The character I have written here is the regular one, but popularly the other character 麻 *ma²*, which means hemp, is substituted for it. In the first verse it is repeated to intensify the original meaning, thus saying "much marked with small pox." 麻跟頭 *ma² ken¹ t'ou²*, *ken¹-t'ou²* is a tumble; the word 麻 *ma²* is referred to the subject. 麻大錢 *ma² ta¹ ch'ien²*, so is called a cash when its surface is suggested, uneven, as if there were marks of small pox on it. 麻燒餅 *ma² shao¹ ping³*, a wheaten cake with an uneven surface, as it is when sesamum seeds are placed on it. 燒餅 *shao¹ ping³*, round wheaten cake.

TRANSLATION

The boy much marked with the small pox — climbs up a tree — the dog barks — and people go to catch him. — The small-pox marked is so scared that he tumbles. — With an old rugged cash he buys a cake — a small pox marked eats — and a small pox marked looks on — the small pox marked come to a fight — and a small-pox marked advises peace — small pox marked policemen — take the bamboo stick — and only thrash the legs of the small pox marked boy.

VIII

誰	跟	我	頑	兒
打	火	鑷	兒	
火	鑷	兒	燒	
賣	甜	瓜		
甜	瓜	苦		
賣	豆	腐		
豆	腐	爛		
茶	雞	蛋		
雞	蛋	雞	殼	殼
裏	頭	坐	哥	哥
哥	頭	出	買	茶
裏	頭	坐	奶	奶
奶	奶	出	燒	香
燒	了	鼻	子	眼

NOTES

火鑷兒 *huo³ lien²r*, a piece of steel used to strike sparks from a flint. 甜瓜 *t'ien² kua¹*, sweet melon. 豆腐 *tou⁴-fu³*, bean cheese, largely used in China. 茶雞蛋 *ch'a² chi¹ tan⁴*, eggs boiled in tea. 雞蛋殼兒 *chi¹ tan⁴ k'o¹r* the shell of an egg; it is generally pronounced *k'o²r*.

TRANSLATION

Who is going to play with me? — strike the flint-steel — the flint steel takes fire — sell sweet melons — the sweet melons are bitter — sell bean cheese — the bean cheese is spoiled — boil eggs in tea — in the shell of the egg, of the egg — there is sitting the elder brother — the elder brother goes out to buy provisions — inside there sits the grand-mother — the grand mother goes out to burn incense — and burns her nose and her eyes.

IX

我 一 個 大 兒 子
一 個 兒 子
寶 貝 疙 疸 兒
開 胸 順 氣 丸

NOTES

These words are often repeated by the pekinese mothers to their babies 疙疸兒 *ko' ta' 'r*, means here a little thing of a round form just as it was a round metal button. 開胸順氣丸 *k'ai' hsiung' shun' ch'i' uan'*, is a medical pill advised by chinese doctors to people who feel the breast oppressed and the respiration uneasy. The literal translation of its

name is “pill which opens (lightens) the breast and makes the respiration easy. The mothers liken their babies to that pill, and really every mother holding her child in her arms must feel happy and free from every sorrow.

TRANSLATION.

This one ^{big} great son of mine! — one son of mine! a precious little thing! — a pill who lightens the heart and makes ^{me} people happy!

X

我 兒 子 睡 覺 了
我 花 兒 困 覺 了
我 花 兒 把 卜 了
我 花 兒 是 個 乖 兒 子
我 花 兒 是 個 哄 人 精

NOTES

These words are repeated by mothers near the cradles of their sons to get them asleep. The phrase 把卜了 *pa⁴ pu³ la*, is rather difficult to explain, because the Chinese themselves cannot give it a meaning. However, after many enquiries I see that people are generally of opinion that this phrase has the meaning of being drowsy, being

asleep. 乖兒子 kuai¹ eur² tzu³, an obedient boy, meaning derived from the above mentioned phrase 乖乖 kuai¹ kuai¹, “be quiet!” 哄人(的)精 hung³ jen² ti¹ ching¹, the word hung³ which means commonly to deceive, but its original meaning is to cajole, to flatter, to charm. The word ching¹ means essence, *ghost of* semen; the whole phrase could be translated: the essence, the *ghost of* flower of those who charm people.

TRANSLATION

My flower is sleeping — my flower has fallen asleep — my flower is resting — my flower is a quiet son — my flower is the *a quiet* flower of those who *can* charm people.

XI

黃	狗	黃	狗	你	看	家	
我	到	南	邊	探	梅	花	
一	朵	梅	花	沒	探	了	
雙	雙	人	兒	到	我	家	
我	家	媳	婦	兒	會	擗	麪
拿	起	擗	麪	杖	一	大	片
拿	起	刀	賽	如	線		
擱	在	鍋	裏	團	團	轉	
盛	在	碗	裏	蓮	花	瓣	

公	一	碗	婆	一	碗				
兩	個	小	姑	兒	兩	半	碗		
案	板	底	下	藏	一	碗	碗		
貓	兒	過	來	舔	舔	碗	碗		
狗	兒	過	來	砸	了	碗	碗		
耗	子	過	來	鋸	上	碗	碗		
嚇	的	媳	婦	兒	直	瞪	眼		
媳	婦	兒	媳	婦	兒	在	那	兒	睡
在	爐	坑	裏	睡					
鋪	甚	麼							
鋪	羊	皮							
蓋	甚	麼							
蓋	狗	皮							
枕	甚	麼							
枕	棒	錘							
公	公	拿	着	一	落	磚			
婆	婆	拿	着	一	溜	鞭			
打	的	媳	婦	兒	一	溜	烟		

NOTES

This song although very childish, yet is founded on the fact that chinese mothers-in-law are often unkind and sometimes even cruel to their daughters-in-law. 雙雙人兒 *shuang¹ shuang¹ jen²r*, means a couple of persons, not four persons. 我家媳婦兒 *uo³ chia¹ hsi² fu²r*, "the wife in my house" probably these words are meant to be

uttered by the mother in law, who may call so her son's daughter. 擀麪 kan³ mien⁴, to stretch out dough to make vermicelli. 擀麪杖 kan³ mien⁴ chang⁴, a roller to stretch dough. — 大 片 i¹ ta¹ pien⁴, a large flat piece (of dough); in the text the verb "she stretches out" is wanting. 賽如線 sai⁴ ju⁴ hsien⁴, which may rival, compete with thread as to thinness. 團團轉 t'uan² t'uan² chuan⁴, conglomerated they turn round in the pan. (said of the vermicelli) 蓮花瓣 lien²-hua¹-pan⁴, (as they were) petals of the lotus blossom. 公 kung¹ father-in-law, here kung¹ is instead of 公公 kung¹ kung¹. 婆 p'uo², mother in law, here p'uo² is instead of 婆婆 p'uo² p'uo². 小姑兒 hsiao³ ku'r, her husband's younger sisters. 案板 an⁴ pan³, a wood board on which dough is stretched to make vermicelli. 爐坑 lu² k'eng¹ is a pit under the stove where the ashes fall down; an uncommon severe punishment inflicted by mothers-in-law to their daughters-in-law is to let them sleep in the stove-pit. 鋪甚麼 p'u¹ she² mmo, what have you for bedding? 枕甚麼 chen³ she² mmo, what have you for pillow? Somebody is supposed to ask now from the unfortunate wife about her condition. 棒錘 pang⁴ ch'ui², a beater used in washing clothes; it is generally made of 棗木 tsao³ mu⁴, date wood. — 落磚 i¹ luo⁴ chuan¹, a pile of bricks, that is to say, as many bricks as could form a pile of them. — 溜鞭 i¹ liou⁴ pien¹, "a row of whips" rather a strange expression for many whips, lots of whips. — 溜烟 i¹ liou⁴ yen¹, as a stream of smoke; the verse is not

complete because its whole meaning is: they beat the wife so that she runs away as quickly as a stream of smoke (a cloud of smoke). The Chinese associate the idea of smoke with quickness; very often it is heard 他走一溜烟兒似的 *t'a' tsou³ i' liou⁴ yen' r shih'-ti*, he walks as quickly as a stream of smoke.

TRANSLATION

Yellow dog, yellow dog, look after the house — I go towards South to pluck plum-blossoms — I have not yet plucked a single plum-blossom — and two persons arrive at the house — my son's wife knows how to stretch out dough — she takes the roller and stretches a large slice of dough — she takes the knife and cuts vermicelli as thin as thread — then she puts them in the cooking-pan, and they turn conglomerated about — afterwards she puts them down in the bowls and they look like petals of the lotus blossom. — (She fills) one bowl for her father-in-law — one bowl for her mother-in-law — and two half-bowls for her sisters-in-law — she hides one bowl under the dough-board — but the cat comes over and licks the bowl — the dog comes over and has broken the bowl — the mice come over and gnaw the bowl — and the housewife is so scared that she stares vacantly — “wife, wife, where do you sleep?” — “I sleep in the stove-pit — what have you for

bedding? — I have for bedding a goat's skin — what have you for coverlet? — I have a dog's skin — what have you for pillow? — I have a linen-beater — the father-in-law takes up in his hands as many bricks as could form a pile — the mother-in-law holds up in her hands a row of whips — and they beat the wife so that she runs away as quickly as a stream of smoke.

XII

寒鴉兒 寒鴉兒 過
一 遍 打 十 個
熬 着 吃
煮 着 吃
剝 了 皮 兒 更 好 吃

NOTES

寒鴉兒 *han² ya'r'* is the *Corvus monedula*, a white breasted crow; a large number of them comes to Peking from the North, at the beginning of winter, and their first apparition is greeted by the Pekinese boys with these verses who are however too gastronomic to be sentimental. The flesh of these crows is eatable, but the taste for it is not general. — 遍 *i¹ pien¹*, at one time. 剝 *puo¹* is read vulgarly *pao²*.

TRANSLATION

The white breasted crows, the white breasted crows are passing — at one time we strike ten of them — we eat them boiled in gravy — we eat them boiled — but they are even better to eat when the skin is taken off them.

XIII

小	白	菜	兒						
地	裏	黃							
七	八	歲	兒						
離	了	娘							
好	好	兒	跟	着	爹	爹	過		
又	怕	爹	爹	娶	後	娘			
娶	了	後	娘	三	年	整			
養	了	個	兄	弟	比	我	強		
他	吃	菜							
我	泡	湯							
哭	哭	啼	啼	想	親	娘			

NOTES

—> Of all the popular songs that are in this collection, I think this one could claim any artistic value. It is very simple, subject and words, but the

child's grief is movingly depicted. The boy likens himself to a small cabbage which gets yellow and dry in the earth, because nobody takes care of it. The comparison is not poetical for us, but in China there is nothing peculiarly vulgar attached to the word cabbage. 過 kuo⁴ is here for 過日子 kuo⁴ jih⁴-tzu, to live, to get on. 三年整 san¹ nien² cheng³, just after three years. 泡湯 p'ao¹ t'ang¹, to pour? the gravy on the rice. 哭哭啼啼 k'u¹ k'u¹ t'i² t'i², weeping and wailing.

TRANSLATION

Like the small cabbage — which has become yellow and dry on the ground — at the age of seven or eight years, I have lost my mother. — I lived so well near my father — only I was afraid he would take another wife — and he has taken her; just after three years — they have given me a brother who is more worthy than I am — because he eats the food — and I only may pour the gravy on my rice — weeping and wailing I think of my own mother!

XIV

張大嫂
李大嫂

上	南	坡	
摘	豆	角	
肚	子	疼	
往	家	跑	
撩	炕	蓆	
鋪	炕	草	
養	了	個	兒 子
叫	豆	保	
豆	保	開	大 店
又	賣	饅	頭 又 賣 麪

NOTES

大嫂 ta' sao³, general appellation for the eldest brother's wife; married women call each other ta' sao³ for sake of ceremony. 豆角 tou' chiao³, bean pods. 撩 liao¹, to grasp, to pull, here, "to pull away" 炕 k'ang⁴ hsi², the mat wick is spread on the k'ang. Somebody could be curious to know which of the two ladies ran home, but the song does not satisfy the curiosity.

TRANSLATION

Mistress Chang — and Mistress Li — have gone to the Southern slope — to gather bean pods — (one of them) felt a pain in her bosom — and ran home — pulled off the k'ang-mat — spread dry

grass on the k'ang — and bore a child whom she called Tou' pao³ — Tou'-pao³ not it has opened a shop — and sells bread and flower.

XV

日	頭	出	來	一	點	紅	
師	傳	騎	馬	我	騎	龍	
師	傳	騎	馬	透	街	走	
我	騎	青	龍	過	海	東	
海	東	有	我	家	盆	花	
我	家	種	着	五	盆	藥	
大	姐	愛	個	紅	芍	花	
二	姐	愛	個	牡	丹	花	
三	姐	愛	的	是	桃	花	辦
四	姐	愛	的	是	大	蓮	花
剩	下	愛	的	是	無	的	
一	心	五	姐	家	樂	陶	
出	家	要	出	家	陶	氣	
一	來	人	兒	公	婆	熬	
二	來	不	受	丈	夫	子	
三	來	懷	受	不	抱	遙	
四	來	散	淡	又	逍		

NOTES

芍藥 shao² yao¹, peony, lat. *pæonia* 牡丹 mu³ tan¹,

the tree peony, lat. *pæonia mutan*. 蓮花, lien² hua¹,
the lotus flower, lat. *Nelumbium speciosum*. 無的
愛 u² ti¹ ai⁴, she has nothing that she likes. 出家
ch'u¹ chia¹, “to go out of the family” means to enter
the monastic life. 樂陶陶 lo¹ t'ao² t'ao², joyfully,
happily. 熬 ao¹, to boil, to decoct, and figurately to
vex, to disturb. 散淡 san² tan¹, freely, easily, with
no coercions 逍遙 hsiao¹ yao², in a state of peace
and bliss.

TRANSLATION

The sun has come out like a red spot — my
teacher rides on a horse and I ride on a dragon —
the teacher riding on the horse goes along the
streets — I riding on the dark dragon cross over to
the East of the sea — at the East of the sea there lives
my family — and in my family they cultivate five
flower-pots — my first sister likes the red peony —
my second sister likes the tree peony — my third
sister likes the petals of the peach blossom — my
fourth sister likes the large lotus blossoms. — There
is the fifth sister who has nothing she may like —
and does not think of other but of becoming a nun
— the women in the monastic life live very happily
indeed — firstly they do not suffer the vexations of
father-and mother-in-law — secondly they do not
suffer a husband's maltreatment — thirdly they do
not bear children — and fourthly they live freely
and in a condition of blissful peace.

XVI

剔燈棍兒
打燈花兒
爺爺兒尋了個禿奶奶兒
眼又斜
嘴又歪
氣的爺爺兒竟發獃

NOTES

剔燈棍兒 *t'ì teng' kun' 'r*, a wire to pull up the wick in an oil lamp. 打燈花兒 *ta' teng' hua' 'r*, to take away the burned part of the wick. — The scene depicted is rather a comic one; a man has married a woman whom he has never seen, and as soon as he enters the nuptial room, he snuffs the candle to see better and perceives that the bride is a very ugly one. 爺爺兒 *ye' ye' 'r*, means in vulgar Pekinese a man, a husband as 奶奶兒 *nai' nai' 'r*, means a woman, a wife. Both words are used in different meanings in family relations technology. 發獃 *fa' tai'*, to stare vacantly.

TRANSLATION

With the oil-lamp wire — he takes away the burned wick — the man perceives he has got for

靈芝開花兒抱牡丹
水仙開花兒香十里
梔子開花兒嫂嫂望江南

NOTES

It appears this song has no other aim than to put together the greatest number of flowers and plants names. 石榴花 shih² liu² hua¹, pomegranate flowers. 茉莉花 muo⁴ li⁴ hua¹, Arabian jasmine (lat. *Jasminum Sambæ*). 芙蓉花 fu¹ jung² hua¹, the *Hibiscus mutabilis*. 繡花 hsiou⁴ hua¹, flowers embroidered by hand. 蘭芝花 lan² chih¹ hua¹, and also 蘭花 lan² hua¹, the *Cymbidium ensifolium*. 綉球花 hsiou⁴ ch'iu¹ hua¹, sort of geranium (lat. *geranium zonale*). 鬧嚷嚷 nao⁴ jang¹ jang¹, to be noisy, here perhaps to be in confusion, to be meddled together. 秋菊 ch'iu¹ chü², autumn chrysanthemum. 海棠 hai³ t'ang², *pyrus spectabilis*, cultivated for its flowers and fruits. 虞美人 yü² mei² jen², *papaver rhoeas*, a double variety of the poppy. 桂花 kwei¹ hua¹, the *Cassia* flower (lat. *Cinnamomum Cassia*). 官粉 kuan¹ fen³, sort of good white cosmetic powder which ladies rub on their cheeks. 玉簪花 yü⁴ tsan¹ hua¹, *Funkia subcordata*. 下地 hsia⁴-ti⁴, to reach the ground. 羅裙 luo² ch'ün², a long petticoat, made with a sort of silk called 羅 luo². 拖落 t'uo¹ lo⁴, is said of the dresses when they are too long and the skirts sweep the ground. 松花 sung¹ hua¹, pine-

flower. The Chinese use to throw the flowers into the stove to prevent the bad smell of coal. 百合花 *pas³-ho²-hua¹* read also *pu³-ho²-hua¹*, the lily (lat. *Lilium*). 芙姑 *tz'u³ ku¹*, an herb with arrowlike leaves (lat. *Sagittaria sagittifolia*). 荷花 *ho² hua¹*, the Lotus blossom, the same as 蓮花 *lien² hua¹*, (lat. *Nelumbium speciosum*). 靈芝 *ling² chih¹*, the plant of long life. 水仙 *shuei³ hsien¹*, the narcissus. 梔子 *chih¹-tzü*, the gardenia 望江南 *uang¹ Chiang¹ nan²*, means literally "looking towards the South of the river" but it is also a flower name.

TRANSLATION

The bride, is the pomegranate flower — the bridegroom is the jasmine — the curtains are covered with flowers of the Hibiscus mutabilis — the bed is covered with embroidered flowers — the pillow is covered with flowers of Cymbidium ensifolium — and the coverlet is spread with peony flowers — the mattress is strown with geraniums flowers, which are in disorder — they call the autumn chrysanthemum and the flower of the pyrus spectabilis, to let them sweep the floor — here miss poppy has entered the room — there are two mirrors with frames inlaid with silver — and she combs her hair as perfumed as the Cassia flower — then she rubs her face with white cosmetic powder, with the smell of the Funkia subcordata — and she marks a red spot on her lips, as scented as petals of the peach blossom —

she wears a big red overcoat — and a petticoat so long that it sweeps the ground — then she calls the pine flower that it may sweep the floor — the pine flowers beegins to sweep the floor and a lily odour is smelt — the leaves of the *Sagittaria sagittifolia* are pointed — the leaves of the lotus blossom are round — the plant of immortality opening the flowers embraces the tree peony — the narcissus opens the flowers and the odour is smelt as far as ten lì — the gardenia opens the flowers and the sister-in-law “looks toward South.”

XVIII

槐 樹 槐
槐 樹 底 下 搭 戲 台
人 家 的 姑 娘 都 來 了
我 家 的 姑 娘 還 不 來
說 着 說 着 就 來 了
騎 着 驢
打 着 傘
光 着 脊 梁 挽 着 纂

NOTES

槐 樹 huai² shu¹, the ash tree (lat. *fraxinus*). 打
着 傘 ta³ cho¹ san³, keeping the umbrella open. 光
着 脊 梁 kuang¹ cho¹ chi³ niang³, bare from head to

waist. 挽着纂 uan³ cho¹ tsuan³, with the back-hair combed as a chignon.

TRANSLATION

Ash trees, ash trees — under the ash trees they have raised a stage — everybody's girls are come — only mine does not come yet — just while speaking, here she is come — riding on a donkey — with an open parasol — and with her hair combed into a chignon.

XIX

小	二	哥	多						
吃	飯	兒	飯						
吃	完	了							
打	老	婆							
打	的	老	婆	上	窗	戶			
窗	的	沒	有	檔	兒				
打	的	老	婆	照	鏡	兒			
鏡	的	沒	有	底	兒				
打	的	老	婆	唱	曲	兒			
曲	兒	沒	有	頭	兒				
打	的	老	婆	耍	猴	兒			
猴	兒	沒	有	圈	兒				
打	的	老	婆	鑽	天	兒			

NOTES

There is not much coherence in the words, and the fun is in the fact that many verses are ended with the final 兒, which produces a ridiculous effect. 二哥 *eur⁴ ko¹*, the second brother in the family also simply a familiar name. 老婆 *lao³ p'uo³*, an old woman, a wife. The accent falls generally on the 老 *lao³* in this meaning; but if said *lao³ p'uo³ tzü³*, with the accent on the *p'uo³*, then it means “a female servant”. 檔兒 *tang⁴ 'r*, small wood bars placed horizontally in the chinese window-sash. 耍猴兒 *shua³ hou³ 'r*, “to (let) play the monkey, that is to exhibit the tricks of a monkey to gain the life”; the other metaphorical meaning is “to lark, to romp, to be impertinent”. 圈兒 *ch'üan¹ 'r*, a wooden circle through which the monkeys are let jump.

TRANSLATION

The small second brother — eats too much — and when he has finished eating — he beats his wife — and the wife is so beaten that she jumps on the window — the window has no bars — and the wife is so beaten that she looks in the mirror — the mirror has no bottom — the wife is beaten so that she begins to sing — the song has no end — the wife is so beaten that she “plays with the monkey” —

the monkey has no circle — and the wife is so beaten that she springs up to the sky.

XX

金 轆 轆 棒
 銀 轆 轆 棒
 爺 爺 兒 打 板 兒
 奶 奶 兒 唱
 一 唱 唱 到 大 天 亮
 養 活 了 個 孩 子 沒 處 兒 放
 一 放 放 在 鍋 台 上
 啞 兒 啞 兒 的 喝 米 湯

NOTES

轆 轆 棒 *ku' lu' pang'*, a child toy, consisting in a short wood mace with a handle. The wood above the handle is circularly worked as to give the idea of wheels 轆 轆 *ku' lu'*. It is the imitation of an ancient chinese weapon. 大 天 亮 *ta' t'ien' liang'*, when the daylight was very bright. 啞 兒 啞 兒 *tzü' 'r tzü' 'r*, imitates the sound produced by the lips of a person who is sipping broth. There was no character in the dictionary for it, but I was forced to adopt the above written as corresponding to the exact sound and having by side the radical 口.

TRANSLATION

Gilt wood mace — silvered wood mace — the husband strikes the castanets and the wife sings — and they have been singing till broad daylight — and she has born a child, and there was no place to lay him — and they have laid him on the kitchen-stove — where he is sipping the rice gravy.

XXI

扯	扯				
扯	軋	輓	圓		
家	家	門	前	掛	紅 線
紅	線	厚			
甩	大	袖			
一	甩	甩	在	門	後 頭
門	後	頭			
掛	腰	刀			
腰	刀	尖			
頂	大	天			
天	打	雷			
狗	咬	賊			
啼	嚙	嘩	拉	又	一 回

NOTES

These words are sung by children as they give each other the hand and turn around in a circle: no particular defined meaning is attached to them, as they are put together only to keep measure with the steps. 軋 轆 圓 *ku¹ lu¹ yüan²*, as round as a wheel. 甩 *shuai³*, expresses a movement peculiar to the Chinese, that of letting down with a sudden jerk of the arm, the long sleeve which was tucked up the wrist. 唏 溜 嘩 拉 *hsi¹ liu¹ hua¹ la¹*, words with no meaning.

TRANSLATION

Draw, draw — draw the circle as round as a wheel — at every house-door is hanging a red thread — the red thread is thick — drop the sleeve — drop it as far as behind the door — behind the door — is hanging the sword — the sword is cutting — and is so long that it touches the sky — the sky thunders — the dog bites the thieves — *hsiliuhualà* once more!

XXII

大 禿 子 得 病
二 禿 子 慌

三 禿 子 請 大 夫
 四 禿 子 熬 薑 湯
 五 禿 子 抬
 六 禿 子 埋
 七 禿 子 哭 着 走 進 來
 八 禿 子 問 他 哭 甚 麼
 我 家 死 了 個 禿 乖 乖
 快 快 兒 抬
 快 快 兒 埋
 別 讓 那 個 葫 蘆 子 兒 迸 出 來

NOTES

For a baldhead is meant in this song a child, for the reason explained before. 薑湯 *chiang¹ t'ang¹*, ginger broth, a medicine given to make the patient sweat. 乖乖 *kuai¹ kuai¹*, dear, treasure, said of children. 葫蘆子兒 *hu² lu² tzu³ 'r*, the seeds in his gourd (meaning his head). 迸出來 *peng¹ ch'u¹ lai²*, to spring up; said of things which being thrown down, by force of elasticity, spring up.

TRANSLATION

The first baldhead gets sick — the second baldhead is scared — the third baldhead goes to call a doctor — the fourth baldhead boils a ginger decoction — the fifth baldhead bears him (the sick one) on the shoulders — the sixth baldhead buries

him — the seventh baldhead comes in — the eighth baldhead asks “why do you weep”? — In my family a dear baldhead is dead — quickly take him away — quickly bury him — lest the seeds should spring out of his gourd.

XVIII

冬被睡襖襖子子馬叔兒兒娃蛤
一花皮子皮簪圈頭喀鐙縫銀癩兒
過花羊紬破金竹高樹銀牆個個哇
英姐着着着着着着着着着着來
青兒姐蓋蓋穿穿戴戴騎騎登登抱抱步
葉呀跟姐姐姐姐姐姐姐姐姐姐一
樹呀我姐妹姐妹姐妹姐妹姐妹走

NOTES

呀呀兒英 *ya' ya' 'r ying'*, meaningless refrain which rhymes with the preceding verse. 花花被 *hua' hua' pei'*, a coverlet embroidered with flowers. 簪子, *tsan' tzü*, chinese hair-pin. 竹圈子 *chu' ch'üan' tzü*, ear-rings made of bamboo; in Peking ear-rings are generally called 鉗子 *ch'ien' tzü*. 嘎杈 *k'a' ch'a'*, a forked branch 癩蛤麻 *lai' ha' ma'*, a scabby toad. 哇兒呱 *ku' 'r kuà'*, imitates the voice of a toad.

TRANSLATION

The tree leaves are dark — I spend a winter with my elder sister — my elder sister covers her bed with a coverlet embroidered with flowers — and I the younger sister cover my bed with a goat skin — my elder sister wears a satin overcoat — I the younger sister wear a broken skin overcoat — my elder sister wears golden hair-pins — and I the younger sister wear bamboo ear-rings — my elder sister rides on a splendid horse — and I the younger sister ride on a forked branch — my elder sister leans her feet on silver stirrups — and I the younger sister lean my feet on the wall crevices — my elder sister holds in her arms a silver baby — and I the younger sister hold in my arms a scabby toad — which moves a step and then cries *kurkuà kurkuà*.

XXIV

立 了 秋 來 立 了 秋
 八 月 十 五 月 兒 照 高 樓
 鴉 雀 無 聲 人 烟 靜
 瞧 見 了 兩 個 押 虎 子 走 籌
 一 根 燈 草 嫌 他 不 亮
 兩 根 燈 草 又 怕 費 了 油
 有 心 要 買 一 枝 羊 油 燭
 怎 奈 我 手 中 沒 有 猴 兒 頭

NOTES

立 秋 *li⁴ ch'iu¹*, the beginning of winter. 照 *chao⁴*, illumines. 人 烟 靜, *jen² yen¹ ching⁴*, men and smoke (houses) are resting; everything is quiet. 押 虎 子 *ya¹ hu³ tzü*, Peking street watchmen, kept by the Government to tell the hour by striking on a bamboo rattle. 走 籌 *tsou³ ch'ou²*, to take round by night time a bamboo tally from one watch-post to another. 一 根 燈 草 *i¹ ken¹ teng¹ ts'ao³*, a lamp wick made of the stalk of the *Juncus communis* (rushes). 怎 奈 *tsen³ nai⁴*, there is no remedy, no way. 猴 兒 頭 *hou² 'r t'ou²*, a monkey's head, slang Pekinese term to mean money. Several words are used in the same meaning as for instance 大 轆 轤 *ta⁴ ku¹ lu⁴*, the big wheel. 官 板 *kuan¹ pan³*, official stamp, stamped by the Government. Several terms cannot be written

at all, wanting a character for them, not with standing I will venture to write them down with homophonous characters. So for instance 嘎, read ka². Ex. 我的這個褡連兒就剩了叫喚嘎了 uo³ ti¹ che⁴-ko¹ ta¹-lien² 'r ciau¹ sheng⁴ la chiao¹ huan¹ ka² la, "there is noting left in my purse but noisy cash" meaning that the purse only contains two or three cash which at every step meet and ring. It is also said 古嘎 ku³ ka². Ex. 古嘎沒有 ku³ ka² mei³ iou³, I have no cash. Another term is 側 ts'o², or 側羅 ts'o² lo². Foreign words are sometimes used as chi¹-ha¹, the chinese transformation of the Manchu word *jiha* "money" and chao¹ su¹, said to be Mongol and generally used, peculiarly in the whole phrase chao¹ su¹ u¹ kuei³, which is meant for "I have no money" and is all in Mongol.

TRANSLATION

The autumn has set in, the autumn has set in — on the fifteenth of the eighth month the moon illumines the high palaces — crows and other birds are silent and men and houses are resting — I have seen two watchmen who went round taking the watch-tally — here, with only one wick in the lamp, I am sorry it is dark — but I am afraid to consume too much oil burning two wicks — I intend buying a candle of mutton-tallow — but, alas! I have not a single cash in the hands.

such: A first born may be called — 子 *i¹-tzü*, (the form is not much used; the accent falls on the *i¹*). The second son may be called 二哥 *eur¹ ko¹*, or 小一兒 *hsiao³ i¹ 'r*. The third son may be called 三兒 *san¹ 'r*, the fourth 四兒 *ssü¹ 'r*, the fifth 五兒 *u³ 'r*, the sixth 六兒 *liou¹ 'r*, and so forth as far as ten. These milk names are also given to children independently of their order in the family and become like our christian names Charles, John and so forth. 冰糖 *ping¹ t'ang²*, white sugar in pieces sold on the streets to children. — 包豆兒 *i¹ pao¹ t'ou¹ 'r*, a parcel of roasted beans, another delicacy for children. 翻眼 *fan¹ yen³*, to turn up the eyes, like a man who loses his senses and shows the white of his eyes. 淘氣 *t'ao²-ch'í¹*, impertinent, saucy. 戴上鬚子 *tai¹ shang¹ hu² tzü*, to put on a false beard as actors do in theaters.

TRANSLATION

The small Five — and the small Six — with a piece of white sugar — and a parcel of beans — the small Five likes to go high up — and he climbs up to the tip of the branch of the willow tree — the tip of the willow branch is weak — and the small Five tumbles down and hurts himself so that he shows the white of his eyes. — The small Six is really impertinent — he puts on a false beard and sings an act of an opera — when he has finished singing the opera, — he drinks hot broth — the

broth is not cool — and the small Six scalds himself so that he calls for his mother.

XXVI

小 小 子 兒
坐 門 礅 兒
哭 着 喊 着 要 媳 婦 兒
要 了 媳 婦 兒 作 甚 麼
點 上 燈 說 話 兒
吹 了 燈 作 伴 兒
明 兒 個 起 來 梳 小 辮 兒

NOTES

門礅兒 *men² tun¹ 'r*, a big stone-seat placed by the side of a street door. 喊着 *han² cho*, crying loudly.

TRANSLATION

The small boy — is sitting outside the door on the stone-seat — and weeping and wailing he wants to have a wife — when he has got a wife what will he do with her? — when the lamp is lighted he will have a chat with her — when then the lamp is out he will keep company with her —

and the next morning after getting up ^{he}she will comb his ^{her}small pigtail.

XXVII

高 高 山 上 有 一 家
十 間 房 子 九 間 塌
老 頭 子 出 來 拄 拐 棍 兒
老 婆 子 出 來 就 地 兒 擦
看 家 的 狗 兒 三 條 腿
避 鼠 的 狸 貓 短 個 尾 巴

NOTES

拄 *chu³*, to lean on a stick. 拐棍兒 *kuai³ kun¹ 'r*, a stick used by old men to lean on. 就地兒 *chiou¹ ti¹ 'r*, bent to the ground (walking) as very old men do. 擦 *ts'a¹*, to walk painfully dragging (rubbing) the feet on the ground. 避鼠的貓 *pi¹ shu³ ti¹-mao¹*, a cat which shuns (does not catch) mice. 狸貓 *li² mao¹*, the wild cat.

TRANSLATION

On a very high mountain there lives a family — of the ten rooms in the building nine rooms are in ruin — the old man goes out leaning on a stick —

and the old wife walks painfully and bent to the ground. — the dog which watches the house has only three legs — the wild cat which does not catch the mice is without a tail.

XXVIII

香 香 蒿 子
刺 刺 罐 兒
苦 麻 兒
香 菜 兒
喇 叭 喇 叭 花 兒
翠 雀 兒
買 我 的 是 好 漢 兒
買 別 人 的 是 龜 蓋 兒 啲

NOTES

These words are sung by Pekinese boys who want to imitate the ambulant grocer, and tell aloud the names of their wares. 香蒿子 *hsiang¹ hao¹ tzŭ*, the *Artemisia annua*—the chinese make with its dry stalks a sort of vegetable rope which they burn to keep away mosquitoes. 刺刺罐兒 *la¹ la¹ kuan¹ 'r*, a wild grass which grows at the beginning of spring. 苦蕒兒 or 苦菜 *k'u³ ts'ai⁴*, the sowthistle (lat. *Lonchus arvensis*). 香菜 *hsiang¹ ts'ai⁴*, “odorous herbs” (lat. *Coriandrum sativum*) the chinese use its leaves for

parsley. 喇叭花 *la³ pa¹ hua¹*, “trumpet flowers” is the white stramony (lat. *Datura alba*). 翠雀兒 *ts’uei⁴ ch’iao³ ’r*, the larkspur (lat. *Delphinium anthriscifolium*). 龜蓋兒 *kuei¹ kai¹ ’r*, a mild form of the common chinese insult “turtle-shell”.

TRANSLATION

Here is *Artemisia annua* — here is lalaqua’r grass — here are sowthistle and parsley — white stramony flowers — and larkspur — who buys my ware is a good fellow — and who buys other people’s is a “turtle-shell”.

XXIX

泥 泥 泥 泥 餽 餽
 泥 泥 泥 泥 人 兒
 老 頭 兒 喝 酒 不 讓 人 兒
 買 我 的 是 個 好 漢 兒
 不 買 我 的 是 個 王 八 蛋 兒

NOTES

Chinese boys are till a certain age as busy in the manufacture of mud-pies as any other boy in foreign countries. They buy for a few cash ready-made moulds out of which they work pagodas,

small fishes, turtles, and so forth. When the wares are ready and dry, the small merchants sing these verses as if they meant to sell the products of their work. 泥餽餽 *ni² puo¹ puo¹*, is the exact equivalent of the english "mud-pie".

TRANSLATION

Here are mud pies — here are mud figures — the old man drinks wine and does not offer to others — who buys my ware is a good fellow — and who does not buy mine is a turtle's egg.

XXX

水牛兒 水牛兒
先出犄角後出頭
你爹你媽
給你買下燒肝兒燒羊肉

NOTES

In all countries children have verses to address snails, and in China too, although the meaning of the verses is not to be looked for. 水牛兒 *shuei³ niu² 'r*, the snail.

TRANSLATION

Snail, snail — you first show out your horns and

NOTES

妞兒 niu¹ 'r, girl, familiar term for 姑娘 ku¹ niang². 吃麪 ch'ih¹ mien⁴, to eat vermicelli. 麪 mien⁴ is here for 麪條兒 mien⁴ t'iao² 'r, 老段 Laô³ tuan⁴, the old man named Tuan, probably a shop-keeper. 寬條兒 k'uan¹ t'iao² 'r, flat and large vermicelli. 細條兒 hsi⁴ t'iao² 'r, finer vermicelli. 簾子棍兒 lien²-tzü³ kun⁴ 'r, another sort of vermicelli so called because of its resemblance to the bamboo sticks which are bound together to form a summer curtain. 來不哼 哎喲 lai² pu eng a-yo, meaningless refrain. 腰窩兒 iao¹ uo¹ 'r, "the loins nest" the best part of the loins of a mutton or a beef. 後腿兒 hou⁴ t'uei³ 'r, the back part of the thigh. 真肥瘦 chen¹ fei² shou⁴, "really there are both fat and lean", that is very good meat—a buyer going to the butcher's shop, if not particularly wishing to get more fat or more lean, calls the meat he wants 肥瘦 fei² shou⁴ that is fat and lean together. So the phrase 你給我一斤肥瘦兒 ni³ kei³ uo³ i¹ chin¹ fei² shou⁴ 'r, means "give me a pound of good meat". 梨糕 li² kao¹, pear jam dried in slices. 酥 su¹, is said of the food and particularly of pastry, when it is so delicate that it melts in the mouth—french "fondant". 脆 ts'uei⁴, crisp. 豆汁兒 tou⁴ chih¹ 'r, a decoction of seeds which is drunk in spring time and is thought a powerful agent to cool one's blood: it is mostly used by Bannermen. 老西兒 lao³ hsi¹ 'r, nickname given

by the Pekinese to the natives of the Shan-hsi province, who do not enjoy a very good reputation, even among Pekinese. Here they are quoted because they are generally fond of sour food as the *tou⁴-chih¹* is. 黃瓜菜 *huang² kua¹ ts'ai⁴*, salted cucumber. 白薯 *pae² shu³*, the sweet potatoes. 穰兒 *jang² 'r*, the pulp of a fruit, the stuff of a pudding, generally the interior of objects, from a cake to a clock.

TRANSLATION

Young lady, if you want to eat vermicelli, — we will go to see the old Tuan for you, — who has flat vermicelli, and thin vermicelli — and “curtain-sticks” vermicelli — Young lady, if you want to eat meat — we will go to the old Six’s for you — he has got good loin of mutton and good haunch of mutton — both fat and lean meat — Young lady, if you want to eat pear-jam — we must also boil it in white sugar — it is really melting in the mouth and so crisp! — and what a big slice of it! — Young lady, if you want to drink bean decoction — then we must go to the old Shan-hsi man’s — how sour it is! how bitter it is! — and how sour the salt cucumbers taken with it — Young lady, if you want to eat sweet potatoes — we will go to the old Five’s — who has there large slices of sweet potato pulp — which smell like chestnuts.

XXXII

出 了 門 兒
 陰 了 天 兒
 抱 着 肩 兒
 進 茶 館 兒
 靠 爐 台 兒
 找 個 朋 友 尋 倆 錢 兒
 出 茶 館 兒
 飛 雪 花 兒
 老 天 爺
 竟 和 窮 人 鬧 着 頑 兒

NOTES

These verses are supposed to be uttered by a beggar who complains of his bad luck on a winter's day. The song is rhymed by adding the character 兒 *eur*² at the end of each verse. 抱着肩兒 *pao*⁴ *cho*² *chien*¹ 'r, lit. "embracing one's shoulder" that is to keep the arms folded on the breast, as Chinese beggars do when they feel cold. 爐台兒 *lu*² *t'ai*² 'r, a small stove made of bricks. 尋 *hsin*², means to ask something from somebody, to look for, the ordinary sound of the character is *hsün*. 老天爺 *lao*³ *t'ien*¹ *ye*², the old gentleman in the sky. Has no relation whatever with our religious beliefs. — the expression

is a very common one but the same Chinese are the first to be puzzled when asked for the meaning. It is a personification of the providence; luck, justice, and also weather, and is as undefined a word as many others in Chinese. 雪花兒 *hsüé³ hua¹ 'r*, lit. snow-flowers, snow-flakes. 鬧着頑兒 *nao¹ cho² uan² 'r*, to play with, to make sport with.

TRANSLATION.

As soon I have gone out — the weather has become cloudy — folding my arms on my breast — I enter a tea-shop — I lean against the brick stove — and look for a friend from whom I may beg some money — as I go out of the tea-shop — here snow-flakes are falling — the old gentleman in the sky — only likes to make sport with us poor people.

XXIII

裕	連	兒	搭			
我	和	裕	連	兒	作	親
親	家	的	姑	娘	會	梳
一	梳	梳	了	個	麥	子
麥	子	磨	成	麪		
芝	蔴	磨	成	油		
黃	瓜	上	了	架		
茄	子	打	提	溜		

NOTES

The beginning of the song does not seem to have any comprehensible meaning and I can only translate it literally. 褡連兒 *ta' lien² 'r*, cloth purse in which the chinese keep their banknotes, called also 錢褡連兒 *ch'ien² ta' lien¹ 'r*, money purse. Another sort is styled 檳榔褡連兒 *ping¹ lang² ta' lien² 'r*, and is used for holding betel nuts, as the name shows. 作親家 *tsuo¹ ch'in¹ chia¹*, to become a relative. The word *ch'in¹ chia¹* means all relations who bear a different family name. The word is in modern Pekinese wrongly pronounced *ch'ing¹ chia¹*. 梳了個麥子熟 *shu¹ la¹ ko¹ mai¹ tzŭ shou²*, she has taken as much time to comb her hair, as would be required for the wheat to become ripe in the fields. 上了架 “has grown on the bower”. Cucumber plants are made creep on small bowers. 打提溜 *ta³ ti¹ liu¹*, to swing, pushed by the wind.

TRANSLATION

The purse, the purse — I have become a relation of the purse — the purse family's girl knows how to dress her hair — and has taken as much time to comb it as is required for the wheat to get ripe — for the wheat to be ground and made into flour — for the sesamum to be ground and made into oil — for the cucumber to grow on the bowers — and for the brinjal fruit to be swung by the wind.

XXXIV

羅 鍋 子 橋
一 磴 兒 到 比 一 磴 兒 高
燈 籠 兒 闌 草 水 皮 兒 漂
金 魚 兒 咬 着 銀 魚 尾 兒
大 肚 子 的 蝦 蟆
哇 兒 呱 哇 兒 呱 的 叫

NOTES

This stanza is composed in praise of the fine scenery in the Emperor's Summer palace grounds, where the hunchbacked bridge is also to be seen. 一 磴 兒 *i' teng' r*, a step in a staircase, in a flight of stairs. 闌 草 *cha' ts'ao'*, grass which grows near the gatelocks, called also 燈 籠 兒 草 *teng' lung' r ts'ao'*, "lantern grass" from its leaves being strung to a stalk like so many chinese lanterns to a rope. 金 魚 兒 *chin' yü' r*, "goldfish". 水 皮 兒 *shuei' p'i' r*, the surface of the water, lit. "the water skin". 銀 魚 兒 *yin' yü' r*, "silverfish".

TRANSLATION

On the hunchback bridge — one step is higher than the other — under the bridge the leaves of the lantern grass float on the water — the goldfish

run after the silverfish and bite their tails — and
the toads with big bellies — cry kurkuà kurkuà.

XXXV

東 嶽 廟
東 廊 下
東 廊 下 有 個 塹 兒
蹲 着 個 金 眼 綠 毛 龜 兒
解 南 來 了 個 鬼 兒
挑 着 一 担 水 兒
攔 下 水 兒 撿 根 棍 兒
單 打 金 眼 綠 毛 龜 兒 的 腿 兒

NOTES

東嶽 *tung¹ yü⁴*, one of the five sacred mountains,
the 泰山 *t'ai⁴ shan¹*, in the Shantung province. 塹
兒 *tun¹ 'r*, a small earth mound. Each verse ends with
the character 兒 *eur²*, which gives fun to the song.

TRANSLATION

In the temple of mount T'ai-shan — under the
east verandah — under the east verandah there
is an earth mound — on which squats a turtle with
golden eyes and a shell covered with green moss
— from the south has come a devil — bearing on his

shoulders a load of water — he lays down the water, picks up a stick — and only strikes the legs of the turtle with golden eyes and the shell covered with moss.

XXXVI

大娘子 喝酒
 二娘子 筵
 三娘子 棒過小菜碟兒來
 四娘子 來回的 去端菜
 五娘子 一傍把座兒安排
 他說 是大家湊個團圓會
 滑拳行令樂開懷

NOTES

大娘子 *ta⁴ niang² tzŭ*, is the wife of the first brother in the family. 二娘子 *eur⁴ niang² tzŭ*, is the wife of the second brother and so forth. 篩酒 *shai¹ chiou³*, to warm the wine before drinking it. 棒 *p'eng³*, to keep on one's hands, to present, to offer. 小菜兒 *hsiao³ ts'ai⁴ 'r*, salted vegetables with which the Chinese relish their food. 端菜 *tuan¹ ts'ai⁴*, to bring the food on the table. 一傍 *i p'ang²*, by the side, aside. 團圓會 *t'uan² yŭan² huei⁴*, general feast in which all the members of the family collect to dine together. This day falls on the fifteenth of the

eighth month, because in that night the moon is perfectly full 團圓 t'uan² yüan². 擲拳 hua² ch'üan², to play at guessfingers, at morra. 行令 hsing² ling⁴, literary amusement. Somebody in the company begins by giving a verse or a classical phrase, and the other members of society must follow by inventing another verse or phrase with the same rhyme, or with the same parallelism of words, or the same style of allusions. The man who first exhausts his stock of phrases is punished by being forced to drink a number of glasses of wine.

TRANSLATION

The first lady drinks wine — the second lady warms the wine — the third ladies come bringing in small saucers with salted cucumbers — the fourth lady at the side arranges the places (covers) — she says that every body has come for a complete meeting — to play at guessfingers, to play at allusions game, and to be merry.

XXXVII

禿子禿
上腦箍

箍出油來
煎豆腐

NOTES

These words are sung to tease the boys, who

have their hair shaven. 箍 *ku¹*, a ~~whoop~~, an iron belt put about barrels. 腦箍 *nao³ ku¹*, is the name of an old instrument of torture consisting of a red hot circle of iron which was put on the head.

TRANSLATION

You baldhead — we will ~~put~~ a red hot ~~whoop~~ round your head — and with the oil we will press out of it — we will fry bean-cake.

XXXVIII

搭 連 兒 搭
我 和 裕 連 兒 作 親 家
親 家 的 姑 娘 病 兒 沉
請 了 個 大 夫 把 脈 診
開 了 個 藥 方 兒 把 藥 尋
開 的 是 蚊 子 膽
蛇 蚤 心
蒼 蠅 翅 膀 兒 要 半 斤

NOTES

The beginnig of this song is identical with that of song N° 33. 診脈 *chen¹ muo¹*, to feel the pulse as chinese doctors do. 藥方 *iao¹ fang* medical prescription written and signed by the physician.

蚊子 uen² tzu, the mosquito. 虻蚤 ko⁴ tsao³, the flea.
蒼蠅 ts'ang¹ ying³, the fly.

TRANSLATION

The purse, the purse — I am now a relation of the purse family — but their daughter has grown dangerously sick — and they have called a physician who has felt her pulse — and then has written a prescription, and people have gone to buy the medicines — on the prescription there is written: mosquito's livers, flea's hearts and half a pound of flies wings.

XXXIX

三	兒	三	兒				
穿	的	是	甚	撒	兒		
穿	的	是	青	洋	縐	褲	子
青	洋	縐	汗	襖	兒		
梳	着	個	牛	糞	瓢	兒	
左	邊	戴	着	晚	香	玉	
右	邊	戴	着	茱	莉	花	兒
五	分	底	兒	的	雙	臉	兒
漂	白	的	襪	子	明	期	臉
							兒

NOTES

These words are addressed to a young girl, as

may be seen from the description of her dress, which follows. The slang word *sa² 'r*, not generally known even among Pekinese, means dress, fashion, toilette. As no written character exists to represent this sound and this meaning, I have used for it the character *撒* which being originally in the first tone, here ought to be read in the second. Wanting to find a character for the word, it could be formed this combination *撒* to be read *sa² 'r*. — One of the phrases commonly heard is this 你有撒兒沒撒兒 *ni³ iou³ sa² 'r, mei² sa² 'r?* — meaning “have you got a good dress or not?” 洋縐 *yang² chou¹*, crape imported by foreigners. 汗褌兒 *han¹ t'ai¹ 'r*, sort of cloth under-dress or shirt worn by Chinese in contact with the skin. European shirts are mostly styled 汗衫 *han¹ shan¹*. 牛糞 *niu² fen¹* “ox-dung”, name for a sort of head dress, more decently called 圓頭 *yüan² t'ou²* “round head”. 瓠 *p'ai³*, character not noted in the dictionaries but mentioned by Sir T. Wade in his Tone exercises. It means “to let oneself down, to lie down, and then to be seated, placed”. Here it is used as a noun, and is referred to the chignon placed on the girl's head. 晚香玉 *uan³ hsiang¹ yü¹*, the gem which smells in the evening, the *tuberosa* (lat. *Polianthes tuberosa*). 五分底兒 *u³-fen¹ ti³ 'r*, thick five fen. The fen is the tenth part of the *ts'un*, an inch. The shoe sole is called 底兒 *ti³ 'r*, or 底子 *ti³ tzu*, and may be as thick as five or six inches. That sort of heel which is placed sometimes in the center of the sole in

ladies shoes is called 花盆底兒 *hua¹ p'en² ti³ 'r*, “flower-pot heel”. 雙臉兒鞋 *shuang¹ lien¹ 'r hsie²*, literally “two faced shoes,, are so called when two ornamental leather strings, come from under the sole on the point of the shoe. 漂白 *p'iao¹ pai²*, whitewashed, painted in white — the character 漂 is here vulgarly *p'iao³*. 明期臉兒 *ming² ch'i lien³ 'r*, chinese socks are so called when the seam is to be seen in the middle.

TRANSLATION

San'r, San'r, what sort of dress have you put on? — “I have put on trowsers made of foreign crape — and a shirt made of foreign crape — my hair is combed in a round chignon — on the left of it I have stuck a tuberosé — and to the right a jasmine — then I have got shoes with a sole half-inch thick and with leather ornaments — and white socks with the seam to be seen outside.

XL

咩 咩 羊
跳 花 牆

抓 把 草
餵 他 娘

NOTES

咩 *mie¹*, the sheep's bleating. 他娘 *t'a¹ niang²*, the small sheep's mother. This is one of those

little songs the mothers teach their children, when they begin to speak.

TRANSLATION

The bleating small sheep — has jumped over the flowery wall — to catch a bunch of grass — and to feed her mother.

XLI

大翻車
小翻車
一翻翻了個花大姐
紅裙兒
綠襖兒
丁香小腳兒
對面喝酒兒
倒像親姐兒倆

NOTES

The beginning of this song is not clear; it appears that the disposition of words in the first and in the second verse is irregular, saying 大翻車 小翻車 *ta' fan' tch'o' - hsiao' fan ch'o* instead of 大車翻 小車翻 *ta' ch'o' fan' - hsiao' ch'o' fan'*, meaning the big cart has overturned, the small cart has overturned. Furthermore the song speaks at the

beginning of only one girl and it ends with two. That shows the song is not complete and every cart is supposed to be occupied by a girl. 花大姐 *hua' ta' chie³*, lit. "a flowery elder sister" means, a beautiful and well dressed girl. It is also said in the same sense 花姐兒 *hua' niu' 'r*. 丁香 *ting hsiang*, clove, very small feet are compared to grains of clove.

TRANSLATION

A big cart has overturned — a small cart has overturned — and a very beautiful young lady has fallen out of one — (and another young lady has fallen too) — with a red petticoat — and a green overcoat — with feet as small as grains of clove — they drink wine one in front of the other — and really are very much like two sisters.

XLII

高	高	山	上	一	座	小	廟	兒
裏	頭	坐	着	個	神	道	兒	
頭	上	戴	頂	羅	帽	兒		
身	上	穿	件	外	套	兒		
兩	個	小	鬼	喝	道	兒		
四	個	小	鬼	抬	着	籐	轎	兒
出	了	門	兒	一	遶	兒		
出	巡	回	來	歸	廟	兒		

NOTES

神道 *shen² tao⁴*, a spirit. 外套兒 *uai⁴ t'ao⁴ 'r*, “external cover” is a sort of long dress, worn externally. 喝道兒 *ho¹ tao⁴ 'r*, and also 喝道子 *ho¹ tao⁴ tzü*, to shout before the chair of an official to make way. 籐轎 *t'eng² chiao⁴*, a light chair made of rattan. — 遶兒 *i jao⁴ 'r*, a turn, a stroll. 出巡 *ch'u¹ hsün¹*, to go out on a tour of inspection.

TRANSLATION

On a very high mountain there is a small temple — and inside sits a spirit — he wears on his head a crape-hat — and wears on his body a long gown — two small devils go in front shouting for room — four small devils bear the rattan-chair — he has gone out for a stroll — to make an inspection and then returning comes back to the temple.

XLIII

新 打 一 把 茶 壺 亮 堂 堂
新 買 一 個 小 猪 兒 不 吃 糠
新 娶 一 個 媳 婦 兒 不 吃 飯
眼 淚 汪 汪 想 他 親 娘

NOTES

打 *ta³*, to beat, to strike, to work in metal. 亮

堂堂 liang¹ t'ang¹ t'ang¹, very bright; the character 堂 is originally read in the second tone, but here is pronounced in the first. 糠 k'ang¹, husks of grain with which pigs are fed.

TRANSLATION

A newly made metal tea-kettle is very bright
— a newly bought small pig does not eat husks of
grain — a newly married wife does not take food —
she weeps profusely and thinks of her mother.

XLIV

一 進 門 兒 喜 冲 冲
院 子 裏 頭 搭 大 棚
洞 房 屋 子 把 燈 點
新 姑 娘 一 傍 淚 盈 盈
新 郎 不 住 的 來 回 觀
說 你 不 吃 點 兒 東 西 兒
我 可 心 疼

NOTES

This song contains a sketch of marriage ceremonies. 喜 冲 冲 hsi³ ch'ung¹ ch'ung¹ very merrily and with much noise. The character 冲 ch'ung means to shake, to dash against, but here it is only used to mean confusion, hurry, disorder. 洞房 tung⁴ fang², the bridal room. 淚 盈 盈 lei¹ ying¹

ying, with many tears. 盈盈 ying¹ ying, flowing, in great quantity, said of tears. The character 盈 is here in the first tone, but its regular tone is the second, and ought to be read ying². 新郎 hsin¹ lang², the bridegroom. 不住的 pu¹ chu¹ ti, without interruption. 來回 lai² hui², repeatedly.

TRANSLATION

Entering the gate, how merry it is! — in the courtyard they have raised a big shed — in the bridal room the lamp is lighted — the bride in a corner is weeping bitterly — the bridegroom repeatedly calls to her — and says: if you do not take some food — my heart will ache.

XLV

和尚和尚搖鈴鐺
嚕兒嗒嗒喝我騎上
騎到那兒去
騎到天邊兒去

NOTES

This song is repeated by boys to ridicule the buddhist priests who go round begging, and read their sacred books shaking a small bell. They are therefore compared to asses and mules which are similarly provided with bells. 鈴鐺 ling² tang¹;

a small bell — 旦兒搭 pronounce törtà, a peculiar voice to get the mule, or the ass to walk. There are of course no characters for it and those written above not only are completely arbitrary, but do not exactly correspond to the pronunciation. The same is to be said for the word 倭喝 uo-ho, which has the same meaning.

TRANSLATION

Oh the bonze, the bonze is shaking the bell —
go ahead! I will ride him — ride how far? — as
far as the boundary of the sky.

XLVI

小 回 回 兒
怎 麼 那 麼 奸
四 兩 猪 肉 約 半 天
左 嫌 小 右 嫌 少
抱 着 猪 頭 往 家 跑

NOTES

These words are sung to insult Mohammedans who are not allowed to eat pork. 左右 tsuo³ iuo⁴, right and left (the Chinese right hand being the European left hand). Means now and now, several times, repeatedly.

TRANSLATION

The small Mohammedan — how deceitful is he! — to buy only four ounces of pork, he is weighing for a good half-day — now he complains it is little and then he complains again it is little — then folding in his arms a pig's head he runs home.

XLVII

一呀二呀
 倒打連三棍兒
 花棍兒五
 銅錢數
 鑿鑿兒六
 銀錠兒七
 花打打兩丈一
 兩甚麼兩
 二馬掌
 二甚麼二
 雙夾棍兒雙
 雙甚麼雙
 虎槓槍虎
 虎甚麼虎
 牛皮鼓牛
 牛甚麼牛

磕郎毬
 磕甚麼磕
 燕窩燕
 燕甚麼燕
 扯花線扯
 扯甚麼扯
 扯孫臆扯
 孫甚麼孫
 呂洞賓呂
 呂甚麼呂
 癩拐甚麼癩
 癩甚麼癩
 竈王爺竈
 竈甚麼竈
 城隍廟城
 城甚麼城

肚兒疼
肚甚麼肚
搖葫蘆
搖甚麼搖

雪花兒飄
雪甚麼雪
孫猴兒倒打豬八戒

NOTES

Chinese children practice a game which is also known by boys in foreign countries. Two boys sit one facing the other and strike first their own hands together and then each other's. To keep measure with the movement they mark, the time with these words, which are meaningless, and are huddled together only for the sake of the final rhymes. The game is called 打花巴掌 *ta³ hua¹ pa¹ chang³*. 呀 *ya¹*, is purely phonetic and meaningless. 倒打 *tao¹ ta³*, to strike alternately — here the character 倒 is pronounced in the fourth and not in the third tone. 連三棍兒 *lien² san¹ kun¹ 'r*, uninterruptedly three sticks (that is to say three blows). 數 in the third tone *shu³*, means to calculate, to reckon. 鑿 *tsān*, to carve, to chisel. 鑿子 *tsan¹ tzū*, a chisel. 銀錠 *yin² ting¹*, an ingot of silver. 夾棍兒 *chia¹ kun¹ 'r*, an instrument of torture to squeeze the ankles lit. squeezing sticks. 嗑郎毬 *k'o¹ lang¹ ch'iu²*; I cannot find any explanation of this. The Chinese say that they do not know the meaning of the word. All that I could get from them is that the vulgar word *k'o¹-lang 'r*, means a corner, and is used instead of the more common 噶拉兒 *ka¹-la² 'r* (written

according to Sir Thomas Wade's manner). The word *ch'iu²* is a ball. Could it be an "empty ball"? — 孫臧 *Sun¹-pin¹* a remarkable minister in the old state of Jen; generally known by all children. 呂洞賓 *Lü³ tung¹ pin¹*, one of the eight genii. 鐵拐李 *t'ie³ kuai³ li³*, another of the eight genii, a lame man called also: 瘸拐李 *ch'üe³ kuai³ li³*, 竈王爺 *tsao¹ uang² ye²*, The god of the cooking stoves, familiar chinese god to whom a sacrifice is offered the 23^d day of the twelfth moon. The god is said to have a wife called 竈王奶奶 *tsao¹ uang² nai² nai³*; she is worshipped in chinese families, but not in the shops, in which only the Tsao-uang is worshipped. 城隍廟 *ch'eng² huang² miao⁴*, the tutelar god of chinese cities. 搖葫蘆 *iao² hu² lu²*, to shake a pumpkin, one of the favourite amusements of chinese babies, who are very often seen deeply absorbed in shaking a small calabash. 孫猴兒 *sun¹ hou²'r*, the monkey traveller in the novel 西遊記 *Hsi¹-yu²-chi⁴*, Recollections of wanderings in the west countries. 豬八戒 *chu¹ pa¹ chie⁴*, a pig spoken of in the same novel as lazy and uxorious and therefore severely beaten by the monkey who was in charge of his education. These notions although taken from a novel in literary style, yet are generally known by the people, that have besides many ditties and rhymes on the subject.

TRANSLATION

One, two — let us strike alternately three

blows — five flowery sticks — count the cash —
 six chisels — seven ingots of silver — let us strike
 as long as two chang and one foot (!) — two, what
 two? — two horse shoes — two, what two? — a
 pair of squeezing sticks — a pair, what pair? — the
 tiger bears a gun on its shoulders — tiger, what
 tiger? — a drum covered with ox skin — ox, what
 ox? — an empty ball (?) — K'o⁴, what K'o⁴? — a
 swallow's nest — swallow, what swallow? — pull
 the flowery thread — pull, what pull? — Sun pin
 pulls — Sun, what Sun? — Lü³-tung⁴ pin — Lü³, what
 Lü³? — The lame genius 'Ch'üe² kuai³ 'r li³ — Ch'üe²,
 what ch'üe? — The god of the cooking stoves. —
 Stove, what stove? — The god protector of the
 city — City, what city? — The belly aches — belly,
 what belly? — shake the pumpkin — shake, what
 shake? — Snow-flakes are whirling round — snow,
 what snow? — The monkey Sun¹ Chu¹-po¹-chie⁴,

XLVIII

打 花 巴 掌 的 正 月 正
 老 太 太 愛 逛 個 蓮 花 兒 燈
 燒 着 香 兒 念 着 佛 兒
 茉莉 茉莉 花 兒 串 枝 蓮
 打 花 巴 掌 的 二 月 二
 老 太 太 愛 吃 個 白 糖 棍 兒
 燒 着 香 兒 念 着 佛 兒

蓮 烟 蓮 蓮 薯 蓮 肉 蓮 鷄 蓮 鴨 蓮
枝三東兒枝四刺兒枝五白兒枝六煮兒枝七煮兒枝八燉兒枝九
串月關佛串月摘佛串月生佛串月白佛串月白佛串月白佛串月
兒三個着兒四不着兒五個着兒六個着兒七個着兒八個着兒九
花的吃念花的魚念花的吃念花的吃念花的吃念花的吃念花的
莉掌愛兒莉掌吃兒莉掌愛兒莉掌愛兒莉掌愛兒莉掌愛兒莉掌
菜巴太香菜巴太香菜巴太香菜巴太香菜巴太香菜巴太香菜巴
莉花太着莉花太着莉花太着莉花太着莉花太着莉花太着莉花
菜打老燒菜打老燒菜打老燒菜打老燒菜打老燒菜打老燒菜打

老 太 太 愛 吃 個 白 花 藕
 燒 着 香 兒 念 着 佛 兒
 茱 莉 茱 莉 花 兒 串 枝 蓮
 打 花 巴 掌 的 十 月 一
 老 太 太 愛 吃 個 雪 花 梨
 燒 着 香 兒 念 着 佛 兒
 茱 莉 茱 莉 花 兒 串 枝 蓮

NOTES

This song, like the last one is also sung by boys when playing at 打花巴掌 *ta³ hua¹ pa¹ chang³*. 正月正 *cheng¹ yüe¹ cheng¹*, the first moon. 蓮花燈 *lien² hua¹ teng¹*, Lantern made of paper and shaped like a lotus flower. 逛燈 *kuang¹ teng¹*, means to go out on the streets to look at the different shows of lanterns exhibited during five days, from the thirteenth to the seventeenth in the first month in the year. The regular day for the show is the 15th on which falls the 燈節 *teng¹ chie²* feast of lanterns. 念着佛 *nien¹ cho¹ Fu³*, uttering prayers before Buddha. 串枝蓮 *ch¹uan¹ chih¹ lien²*, a wild flower not unlike the lotus. This refrain is repeated at every couplet. We translate it only once. 白糖棍兒 *pai² t'ang² kun¹ 'r*, small sugar sticks bought by children. 關東烟 *kuan¹ tung¹ yen¹*, tobacco from Manchuria, the best quality of tobacco. 摘刺 *chai² tz'u⁴*, to take away the bones from a fish. 生白薯 *sheng¹ pai² shu³*, uncooked sweet potato. 燉鴨 *tun¹ ya¹*, a stewed duck. 白花藕 *pai² hua¹ ou³*, a flour made from the

root-stock of the lotus. 雪花梨 *hsüe³ hua¹ l²*, sort of very good pears found in Shantung, whose pulp is said to be as white as flakes of snow.

TRANSLATION

Strike the hands, in the first month of the year — the old lady likes to go out to look at the lotus-lanterns — burning incense and saying prayers — with jasmines, jasmines and wild lotus — Strike the hands, the second day of the second moon — the old lady likes to eat sugar sticks — Strike the hands, the third day of the third moon — the old lady likes to smoke Manchurian tobacco. Strike the hands, the fourth day of the fourth moon — the old lady likes to eat fish without taking the bones away. — Strike the hands, the fifth of the fifth moon — the old lady likes to eat raw yams — strike the hands, the sixth day of the sixth moon — the old lady likes to eat boiled pork — strike the hands, the seventh day of the seventh moon — the old lady likes to eat a boiled chicken with no sauce — strike the hands, the eighth day of the eighth moon — the old lady likes to eat stewed duck — strike the hands, the ninth day of the ninth moon — the old lady likes to eat lotus root flour — strike the hand, the first day of the tenth moon — the old lady likes to eat snow-white pears.

XLIX

打 羅 兒 篩
曳 羅 兒 篩
麥 子 熟 了 請 你 的 伯
你 伯 愛 吃 肉 兒 的
你 叔 愛 吃 豆 兒 的

NOTES

These words are not heard within the walls of Peking, but in the country. 羅兒 *luo² 'r a sif* to bolt flour. 曳 *ye¹*, to drag, to pull, to shake. 伯 read by the peasants not *puo²* but *pai¹*, one's father's elder brother. This character is read also *pai³*, in the word 大伯子 *ta¹ pai³ tzu*, title given to a man by his younger brother's wife. 叔 *shu²* read here *shou²*, as the peasants do. One's father's younger brother.

eve/

TRANSLATION

Beating the sieve sift! — shaking the sieve sift!
— when the wheat is ripe, we will invite your
uncle — your elder uncle likes to eat meat — your
younger uncle likes to eat beans.

L

一 副 筐
 八 根 兒 繩
 挑 起 了 扁 擔 遊 九 城
 賣 葱 阿
 賣 蒜 兒 阿
 賣 青 菜 兒
 打 鼓 兒
 喝 雜 銀 錢 兒
 唉 首 飾 來 賣

NOTES

These words are sung by children to imitate the perambulating vendors in the street. 一副筐 *i' fu' k'uang'* a pair of baskets hanging from the pole called 扁擔 *pian³ tan*. 八根兒繩 *pa' ken' r sheng²*, eight strings. As every basket is attached to an end of the pole by four strings, so eight strings comes to mean a porter's pole and more generally every sort of small chinese industry practiced by vendors furnished with such a pole. 九城 *chiu³ ch'eng²*, the nine cities, the city of Peking. 青菜 *ch'ing' ts'ai⁴* every sort of green vegetable. After speaking of the vendors of vegetables the song comes to speak of a curious sort of small industry practiced in Peking. Two men go together. One marches forward and beats a little drum, the other bearing

on the shoulder a pole with baskets calls loudly for people who are willing to sell silver head-ornaments, or other small objects of value. This proceeding is called 喝雜銀錢 *ho¹ tsa² yin² ch'ien²*, to call for different (and bad quality) silver to buy them for ready money.

TRANSLATION

With a pair of baskets — are provided all the small pedlars — with pole and baskets they go all over the city — to sell onions — to sell garlic — to sell green vegetables — the man who beats the drum — and the other who cries: I buy objects of silver — ohè, (who has got) head ornaments let him come and sell.

LI

翻餅烙餅
油炸餡兒餅
翻過來瞧瞧

NOTES

Chinese boys playing together take each other by the hands and then turn round without separating the hands. The movement of turning round is likened to the action of turning a pie on the pan,

and so this game is called 翻餅烙餅 fan¹ ping³ lao⁴ ping³. 烙餅 lao⁴ ping³, to cook a pie. 油炸 iu²-cha², fried in the oil.

TRANSLATION

Turn the pie, cook the pie — the pie with stuffing fried in oil — turn it round and let us sek.

LII

高高山上一落磚兒
磚兒上坐着個老太兒
三根頭髮馬尾纂兒
一心要戴個涼涼簪兒

NOTES

— 落磚兒 i¹ luo⁴ chuan¹'r, a pile of bricks 馬尾纂兒 ma³ i³ tsuan³ 'r, sort of sham chignon made of the hair of a horse tail. — 心 i¹ hsin¹, she has no other thought but, compare latin "*toto corde*". 涼涼簪兒 summer hair-pins; during the summer ladies are supposed to lay aside silver-pins and to wear jade pins and also jade bracelets and rings. People who cannot afford to buy jade pins, get for a trifling sum pins made of glass, imitating the jade. These last are called liang² liang² tsan¹'r.

TRANSLATION.

On a very high mountain there is a pile of bricks. — On the bricks there is sitting an old lady — with three hairs and a false horse-tail chignon — and she only thinks that she wants to wear summer pins on her hair.

LIII

錢米
兒兒
飯酒
百
點點
的的走
一坐熱凳動子子妹年妹起們們就
走上不板不椅腿妹半妹不你你我
鞋家炕炕搬搬搬沒給還給還吃喝娘
兒窄娘說說說說說說說說說不不親
底兒到哥哥子哥哥子哥哥子哥哥子也也瞧
厚幫我哥嫂哥嫂哥嫂哥嫂哥嫂我我瞧

出門兒遇見個大黃狗
 撕了我的裙兒
 咬了我的手
 忍心的哥哥出來打打狗

NOTES

Chinese wives are allowed from time to time to visit their old family, and to stay there for some days. Here this song depicts the grief of a wife who goes to visit her mother, arrived there she meets with her brother who treats her well and with her sister-in-law who hates her. The words are simple and touching. 厚底兒鞋 *hou⁴ ti³ 'r hsie²*, shoes with a thick heel. 幫兒窄 *pang¹ eur chai³*, the heel-band is narrow, and therefore it is painful to walk. *Pang¹eur* is "the leather heel-band of a shoe, for strengthening the back of a shoe" (Giles). 娘家 *niang² chia¹*, a wife's family. 走一百 *tsou³ i⁴ pai³* I walk a hundred, it is understood 里地 *li³ ti⁴*, chinese miles. The *k'ang⁴*, chinese brick bed is warmed during winter by fuel. 板凳 *pan³ teng⁴*, a wooden stool. 還半年 *huan² pan⁴ nien²*, it may be understood so "to give her a little money we shall borrow it and then we shall not be able to repay it back until after a good half-year". 還不起 *huan² pu⁴ ch'i³*, in the same meaning, we shall not be able to give it back to the person who lends the rice to us. The expression *pu⁴ ch'i³* following the verb, that verb acquires a negative potential meaning, as not

to be able to... or better corresponding to the Chinese, “not to be up to...” 忍心 *jen¹ hsin¹*, these words are a reproach to the brother, meaning you who may tolerate in your heart that I suffer so much, meaning that the brother after all his good intentions lets his wife do as she likes.

TRANSLATION

With high-heeled shoes — and narrow heel-bands — I walk a hundred *li* to arrive at my home, — My elder brother says: Sit on the *k'ang* — my sister-in-law says: the *k'ang* is not warm — my elder brother says: bring here a wooden stool — my sister-in-law says: it cannot be brought round — my elder brother says: bring here a chair — my sister-in-law says: the chair has no legs — my elder brother says: give your younger sister some money — the sister-in-law says: we would take half a year to pay it back — my elder brother says: give your younger sister a little rice — the sister-in-law says, we could not give it back to the lender — But I will not eat your rice — and I will not drink your wine — I will only see my mother and then go away — going out of the gate I have met with a big yellow dog — that has torn my apron — and has bitten my hand — My patient elder brother, come out and beat the dog!

LIV

杜	梨	兒	樹						
開	白	花							
養	活	丫	頭	作	甚	麼			
拿	起	剪	子	瞎	嚙	搭			
嘎	搭	會	了	給	人	家			
爹	也	哭							
娘	也	哭							
女	婿	過	來	勸	丈	母			
丈	母	丈	母	你	別	哭			
我	家	還	有	二	斗	穀			
碾	小	米	兒						
熬	豆	粥							
餓	不	死	你	的	禿	丫	頭		

NOTES

These words are sung to small girls by their parents. The first two verses have nothing to do with the rest, but, as a girl is the subject of the song, they fit very well. 杜梨兒 *ta' li' r*, a pear with small fruit (*Pyrus betulaefolia*). 瞎嘎搭 *hsia' ka' ta'*, familiar expression, it means to make noise using a pair of scissors and without good effect, and it is said of the small girls who begin to learn how to cut the cloth to make dresses of it. Hsia'

originally means blind, and then irregularly, badly as a blind man could do. 給人家 *kei³ jen² chia¹*, they give (the parents) her to people, that is to say they get her married. 豆兒粥 *tou¹ 'r chou*, a gruel made of rice and beans. 禿丫頭 *t'u¹ ya¹ t'ou²* bald-headed servant, title given in the family to small girls, who are generally called by their parents *ya¹ huan²* or 丫頭 *ya¹ t'ou²*. 餓不死 *ngo¹ pu¹ ssu³*, negative potential form, she cannot be starved to death.

TRANSLATION

The small pear-tree — has opened its white flowers — to bring to light a small girl — what is the use of it? — she begins first to take the scissors and to cut badly the cloth — then when she has learned to cut the cloth, one must give her up to other people — the father also weeps — the mother also weeps — the bridegroom comes over to console his mother-in-law — and says: mother-in-law, mother-in-law, do not weep—I have got at home three pecks of grain — we will grind the oats — and boil a rice congee with beans — so that your bald-headed daughter shall not be starved to death.

LV

紅 葫 蘆
軋 腰 兒
我 是 爺 爺 的 肉 姣 兒

我 是 哥 哥 的 親 妹 子
 我 是 嫂 子 的 氣 包 兒
 爺 爺 爺 爺 賠 甚 麼
 大 箱 大 櫃 賠 姑 娘
 奶 奶 奶 奶 賠 甚 麼
 針 線 筐 籬 兒 賠 姑 娘
 哥 哥 哥 哥 賠 甚 麼
 花 布 手 巾 賠 姑 娘
 嫂 嫂 嫂 嫂 賠 甚 麼
 破 罈 子
 爛 罐 子
 打 發 那 丫 頭 嫁 漢 子

NOTES

The words are supposed to be said by a small girl. 紅葫蘆 *hung² hu² lu²*, red pumpkin; the boys who have not enough money to buy playthings, content themselves with pumpkins which they go whirling about. 軋腰兒 *ya¹ yao¹ 'r*, "with crushed sides" is the name of a sort of pumpkin shaped in the form of two balls placed one on the other. Cutting this pumpkin in the middle one has two cups. As to the relation between these words to what follows, I suppose the girl speaks of herself as of a precious little thing, because that kind of pumpkin is sometimes appreciated by the Chinese who buy the smallest for two or three taels, and wear them on the body as an ornament. 肉姣兒

jou¹ chiaol¹ 'r, lit. "my flesh dear", an endearing term for a little girl, meaning to say: you are my own flesh and blood. 氣包兒 ch'i⁴ pao¹ 'r, curious expression said of a person who has the privilege of irritating somebody constantly. The literal translation would be "the wrath-bundle". The small girl speaks so because it is generally admitted and practiced in Chinese families that the elder brother's wife carries on continual warfare with her sisters-in-law. Afterwards the girl pretends to want to know what their relations will give her on her wedding day. To give cadeaux to a bride to form her dowry is called 賠 p'ei², or more completely 賠送 p'ei² sung⁴. 奶奶 nai³ nai³ one's father's mother. The bannermen call nai³ nai³ a mother. 針線筐籬 chen¹ hsien⁴ p'uo³ luo², a basket where needles, pin, thread, scissors are kept and everything else required for ladies' work. 姑娘 ku¹-niang², is here used instead of the personal pronoun thou or you. 罈子 t'an¹ tzü, a big bottle to contain salt vegetables, water and also coal. 罐子 kuan⁴-tzü, other sort of vessel made of porcelain or of earthenware. 嫁漢子 chia⁴ han⁴ tzü to marry a husband, a man. Here it would perhaps be better to translate "a fellow" as the woman's words are not inspired with friendly feelings altogether.

TRANSLATION

The red pumpkin — has crushed sides — I am my grandfather's "own dear flesh and blood" —

I am my brother's "carnal sister" — and I am my sister-in-law's "bundle of wrath" — grandfather, grandfather, what will you give me at my marriage? — "I will give you a big chest and a big wardrobe" — "Grandmother, grandmother, what will you give me?" — "I will give you a work basket" — "Elder brother, elder brother, what will you give me?" — "I will give you a fancy cloth towel" — Sister-in-law, sister-in-law, what will you give me?" — "A broken jar — and a smashed bottle — and send you, that girl, away to marry a fellow".

LVI

樹 葉 兒 黑
 呀 呀 啲 子 煤
 小 黑 兒 長 的 像 李 達
 谷 着 牙 兒 瞪 着 眼 兒
 手 裏 搯 着 個 黑 鞭 杆 兒
 騎 着 黑 牛 兒
 喫 着 個 黑 麵 餅 兒
 一 上 上 在 山 頂 兒

NOTES

These words are sung to children of a brown complexion. The second verse is simply a refrain with no meaning. 小黑兒 *hsiao³ hei¹ 'r*, nickname

given to a brown child. The word *hei*¹ contains all the shades of colour from black to brown. 李逵 *Li*³ *k'uei*², a celebrated brigand in the Sung dynasty, who was of a ^{dark} brown complexion. He is spoken of in the Novel 永濟 *shuei*³ *hu*³. His nickname was 黑旋風 *hei*¹ *hsüan*² *feng*¹, the black whirlwind. 容着牙 *tzü*¹ *cho*¹ *ya*², showing the teeth.

TRANSLATION

The tree-leaves are dark — *yaya yüetzu mei* — the small brown boy is very like *Li-k'uei* — showing his teeth and staring — he grasps in his hand a black whip-stick — he rides on a black ox — eats a cake made of black flour — and going up he gets as far as the mountain summit.

LVII

荆 條 棍 兒
用 處 兒 多
編 了 柳 斗 兒
編 筐 籬
筐 籬 倒 比 柳 斗 兒 大
管 着 柳 斗 兒 叫 哥 哥

NOTES

荆 *ching*¹ is instead of 荆 蒿 花 *ching*¹ *hao*¹ *hua*¹, the *Vitex incisa*, with stems of which baskets are

woven. 柳斗 liou² tou³, a measure made of willow branches; sometimes it is made of *Vitex* stems, but it is even then called a “willow-peck”. 管着 kuan³-cho¹, with regard to, giving a denomination. 荆條棍兒 ching¹ t'iao² kun¹ 'r stems of *Vitex*.

TRANSLATION

The stems of the *Vitex incisa* — are fit for many uses — one may make of it a “willow-peck” — and one may make of it a basket — the basket is indeed larger than the willow-peck — and calls the willow peck “elder brother”.

LVIII

鐵 蠶 豆
大 把 兒 抓
娶 了 個 媳 婦 兒 就 不 要 媽
要 媽 就 要 叉
要 叉 就 分 家

NOTES

The first two verses with which the song begins are called 頭子 t'ou² tzi “head”. They do not seem to have here any relation with the meaning of the following words. The song speaks about some cases in which new-married men forget the duty of obedience to their own mother, and want to set

up a family by themselves. The words are ironical and there is in them a sense of reproach and grief. 鐵 t'ie³, iron, here “as hard as iron”. 蠶豆 ts'an² tou⁴, broad beans, which are sold to children on the streets for the modest sum of a ta for a handful. 大把兒 ta⁴ pa³ 'r, a big handful. 耍叉 shua³ ch'a¹, to fight with a pronged stick, metaph. for “to quarrel”. 分家 fen¹ chia¹, to set up an autonomous family, to separate from the old stock.

TRANSLATION.

Broad beans as hard as iron — to be had in big handfuls — after having married a wife, then he does not want his mother — if he wanted his mother then they would quarrel — and if they quarrelled, then he ^{would break away} (ought to separate) from the ^{family} (old house).
Set up his own.

LIX

娶	媳	婦	兒	的					
門	口	兒	過						
宮	燈	戳	燈	十	二	個			
旗	鑼	傘	扇	站	兩	傍			
八	個	鼓	手	奏	細	樂			
轎	子	抬	着	姑	娘	走			
抬	到	婆	家	的	大	門	口		
進	門	兒	入	洞	房				

去會小新郎
娶了三年並二載
丫頭小子沒處兒擺

NOTES,

娶媳婦兒的 *ch'ü³ hsi² fu⁴ 'r ti*, the persons who go to fetch the bride and take her to the bridegroom's house. A marriage procession. 宮燈 *kung¹ teng¹*, "palace lanterns" a sort of lanterns taken in hand by people in the marriage cortège. They are made with silk, or glass doors, and have no lighted candles in them. 戳燈 *ch'uo¹ teng¹*, another kind of lanterns fixed on a long stick, which may be stuck in the ground. 鼓手 *ku³ shou³*, literally "drum-hands" general name for all musicians who accompany the bride-chair. Some beat drums, other play on a sort of trumpet called 鎖呐 *suo³ na¹*. These men are also called 吹鼓手的 *ch'ui¹ ku³ shou³ ti*. 奏樂 *tsou⁴ yüe⁴*, to play solemn music. 細樂 *hsi⁴ yüe⁴*, a concert, a supposed harmony produced by different instruments. 婆家 *p'uo² chia¹*, mother-in-law, mother-in-law's family, in the husband's family. 小新郎 *hsiao³ hsin¹ lang²*, the young bridegroom. 二載 two years. 三年並二載 *san¹ nien² ping⁴ eur⁴ tsai³*, a curious expression to mean 5 years.

TRANSLATION

The bridal procession — passes by the gate —

there are twelve “palace lanterns” and “fixed lanterns” — banners, gongs, umbrellas, fans are on each side — eight musicians produce music — the chair which contains the girl passes on — and brings her as far as her mother-in-law’s family house-gate — she enters the door and goes into the bridal room — she goes to stay with her young bridegroom — after having married her these five years there are so many babies and girls that there is no more room in the house for them.

LX

喜	雀	尾	巴	長			
娶	了	媳	婦	兒	不	要	娘
媽	媽	要	吃	窩	兒	薄	脆
沒	有	閒	錢	補	笨	籬	
媳	婦	兒	要	吃	梨		
備	上	驢					
去	趕	集					
買	了	梨					
打	了	皮					
媳	婦	兒	媳	婦	兒	你	吃 梨

NOTES

This song is inspired by the same feeling as song N^o. 58. 窩兒薄脆 uo¹ 'r pao² ts'uei⁴, sort of

very hard and cheap cake. 笨籬 *chao' li²*, a big spoon made of willow stems and used to take food out of the pan. The current phrase “we have no idle money to mend the willow spoon” means that a person has no intention of spending money for useless things, as would be to mend a willow spoon. 打皮 *ta³ p'i²*, to peel a fruit.

TRANSLATION

The magpie has a long tail — after he has taken a wife he no more wants his mother — when his mother wants to eat some cheap cake — then (he says) “there is no idle money to mend willow spoons” — when his wife wants to eat pears — then he gets ready his ass — and goes to the market — when he has bought the pears — he peels them — and asks wife, wife, ^{pears} will you eat ^{pears} pears?

LXI

小 禿 兒
長 樣 兒
你 媽 養 活 一 對 雙 棒 兒
多 大 了
會 走 咧
你 媽 肚 子 裏 又 有 咧

NOTES

These words are addressed by one boy to another

in a joking way. 小禿兒 *hsiao³ t'u¹ 'r*, the small baldhead, the boy, used here instead of the personal pronoun "you". 長樣兒 *chang³ yang⁴ 'r*, he is grown up, lit. "his figure has grown". 養活 *yang³ huo²*, to bear of women; it means also to nourish, to give food. 雙棒兒 *shuang¹ pang¹ 'r*, twins, in literary language they are called 雙生 *shuang¹ sheng¹*.

TRANSLATION

You small bald-heads — are grown up — your mother has born a couple of twins — how old are they? — "they can walk" — "your mother is again in the family way".

LXII

花紅柳綠線兒
又買針兒
又買線兒
又買王媽媽褲腿帶兒

NOTES

These words are for young girls who want to begin to work early with needle and thread. 花紅 *hua¹ hung²*, as red as red flowers are. 柳綠 *liou³ lü⁴*, as green as willow-trees are 褲腿帶兒 *k'u⁴ t'uei³ tai⁴ 'r*, cloth bands used by women to bind the trowsers to their ankles.

TRANSLATION

I want red thread as red as red flowers and
green thread as green as green willows — and I
want to buy needles — and to buy more thread —
and to buy ankle-bands (for) mother Wang.

LXIII

糊 糊
糊 狗 肉 嘔
大 鍋 裏 香
二 鍋 裏 臭
請 王 媽 媽 來 吃 狗 肉 嘔

NOTES

Dog meat is a much appreciated dish in China. The character 糊 hu², is used here in want of another, and is pronounced hu¹, in the first tone. It means a special chinese way of preparing meat, by smearing it with sauce and then having it roasted in a pan. There is in the western city a restaurant called 狗 肉 居 kou³ jou¹ chü¹, where roasted dog meat is provided for “amateurs”. 嘔 ou¹, phonetic character with no meaning here.

TRANSLATION

Roast, roast — roast dog meat, oh! — the first

pan smells — and the second pan stinks — I beg mother Wang to come and eat dog meat, oh!

LXIV

禿 禿 鐺
光 光 鐺
廟 裏 的 和 尙 無 頭 髮
你 撻 磚 兒
我 撻 瓦 兒
單 打 和 尙 的 禿 光 把 兒

NOTES

Chinese boys do not show much reverence towards the priests, for whom they always have a ready collection of songs, epigrams and epithets. One of the general names with which Buddhist priests are gratified is 禿驢 *t'u' lu²*, a bald ass. 鐺 *ch'a¹*, small cymbals used as toys; there is no character for the word and I used, in fault of better, this character; its original tone however is the first. As these cymbals are very bright and shining, the pates of bonzes are likened to them. 禿光把兒 *t'u¹ kuang¹ pan³ 'r*, a bald and shining pate.

TRANSLATION

Bald bald cymbals — shining, shining cymbals

the bonzes in the temple have no hair — you fling bricks and I fling tiles — only to strike the bonzes' bald pates.

LXV

煤 模 兒
炒 豆 兒

杜 梨 子
咕 咕 唾 兒

NOTES

Coal dust is mixed up with sand and water and then put into small wood square boxes, out of which the coal comes in the form of a small brick. This sort of coal is called 煤 礮 兒 *mei² chien³ 'r*. When pekinese boys are so lucky as to get hold of one of those wood-boxes called 煤 模 兒 *mei² mu² 'r*, they put inside of it all their small property, as toys, or food. 咕 咕 唾 兒, *ku¹ ku¹ tiu¹ 'r*, seeds of dates.

TRANSLATION

(In) the coal-mould — (there are) roast beans — small pears — and date seeds.

LXVI

丫 頭 丫
會 看 家

偷換芝麻油
 老芝蔴
 米蔴細
 蜜
 油
 燴
 蜜
 兒
 糕
 火
 燒
 的
 了
 頭
 叫
 姥
 姥

NOTES

油 燴 蜜 *iu² cha² mi⁴*, sort of sweet cake made of flower, sugar and honey, and then fried in oil. 蜜兒糕 *tsao³ 'r kao*, pudding of date jam. 火燒 *huo³ shao¹*, "roasted on the fire" name of a cake. 撐的 *ch'eng¹ ti*, with a full stomach from having eaten too much.

TRANSLATION

The small girl — knows how to watch the house — she steals old rice — and barter it for sesamum seeds — the sesamum seeds are small — (and then) a sweet cake — a date-pudding — and a roasted cake — the small girl feels so overeaten that she calls for her grandmother.

LXVII

玲 瓏 塔
 塔 玲 瓏

玲	玲	寶	塔	十	三	層
塔	前	有	座	廟		
廟	內	有	老	僧		
老	僧	當	方	丈		
徒	弟	有	六	名		
一	個	叫	青	頭	愣	
一	個	叫	愣	頭	青	
一	個	是	僧	僧	點	
一	個	是	點	點	僧	
一	個	奔	葫	蘆	把	
一	個	把	葫	蘆	奔	
青	頭	愣	會	打	磬	
愣	頭	青	會	棒	笙	
僧	僧	點	會	吹	管	
點	葫	蘆	會	撞	鐘	
奔	葫	蘆	把	會	說	法
把			奔	會	念	經

NOTES

玲 瓏 ling² lung², elegant, pleasant, smart. 老 僧 lao³ seng¹, an old buddhist priest. 方丈 fang¹ chang¹, the abbot in a buddhist monastery. 徒弟 t'u² ti¹, pupils who are supposed to learn the law and read the sacred books to become priests afterwards. 青 頭 愣 ch'ing¹ t'ou² leng¹, expression impossible to translate; it is applied by Chinese in a despising sense to different objects, as for instance to an

unripe fruit, or to a scorpion. 磬 *ch'ing⁴* a musical stone used as a bell. 笙 *sheng¹*, a sort of pipe. 捧笙 *p'eng³ sheng¹*, to hold the sheng near the mouth by the two hands, that is to say, to play the sheng. 管 *kuan³*, a flute. 撞鐘 *chuang⁴ chung¹*, to strike the bell; chinese bells are not provided with a clapper, but are struck from outside by means of a wood truncheon hanging by cords at a small distance from the bell. 說法 *shuo¹ fa¹*, to speak about the law, to recite a pious sermon.

TRANSLATION

How elegant is the pagoda! — how the pagoda is elegant! — the elegant pagoda has thirteen stores — before the pagoda there is a temple — in the temple there is an old bonze — the old bonze acts as abbot — and has by himself six pupils — one is called — *Ch'ing¹ t'ou² leng⁴*. — one is called *Leng⁴ t'ou² ch'ing¹* — one is *Seng¹ seng¹ tien³* — one is *Tien³ tien³ seng¹* — one is *P'en¹-hu²-lu²-pa⁴* — one is *Pa⁴-hu²-lu²-pen¹* — *Ch'ing² t'ou² leng⁴* can strike the musical stone — *Leng⁴ t'ou² ch'ing¹* can play the pipe — *Seng¹-seng¹-tien³* can play the flute — *Tien³ tien³ seng¹* can strike the bell — *Pen¹-hu²-lu²-pa⁴* can recite a sermon — and *Pa⁴-hu²-lu²pen¹* can read the sacred books.

LXVIII

雉 雞 翎
抱 馬 城

馬城開
丫頭小子送馬來

NOTES

The military officers in the preceding dynasties used to wear on their hats feathers of the ringed pheasant (*Phasianus torquatus*) called 雉雞翎 *chih' chi' ling*². The boys of the present day like to ape these old fashions and stick on their hats some cock feathers, which they suppose to be those of the pheasant. Then some of them have a pasteboard horse's head, and horse's rump; the first they tie to the stomach, the other to the back, and their infantile imagination is quite satisfied, as they gallop here and there singing these verses the meaning of which is very doubtful. The pasteboard horse has inside a frame of bamboo sticks and is called 竹馬 *chu² ma³*.

TRANSLATION

With ringed pheasant feathers — I gallop to
the horse city — the city opens the gate — and
girls and boys come out leading a horse for me.

LXIX

藍靛廠
四角兒方

宮 門 口 緊 對 着 六 郎 莊
 羅 鍋 兒 橋 怎 麼 那 麼 高
 香 山 跑 馬 好 熱 鬧
 金 山 銀 山 萬 壽 山
 皇 上 求 雨 黑 龍 潭

NOTES

This song has no other aim than that of collecting names of places in Peking and near Peking. 藍靛廠 lan² tien¹ ch'ang³ the indigo factory, name of a place near Ta-chung-ssu; the ground is now occupied by military quarters for bannermen. 宮門口 kung¹ men² k'ou³, is the name of a street near the P'ing-tse-men. 六郎莊 liu¹ lang² chuang¹ "the Liou⁴ lang²'s" farm. A place to the South of Yüan²-ming²-yüan². As a matter of fact the Kung¹ men² k'ou³ street and this farm cannot face one another because the street is inside of the city and the farm is in the Hai³-tien⁴. 羅鍋橋 luo² kuo¹ ch'iao², the hunchbacked bridge in Yüan²-ming²-yüan² (see song N° 34). 香山 hsiang¹ shan¹ "perfumed mountains" hills near Peking. 跑馬 p'ao³ ma³, the place in which military men train themselves to shoot arrows whilst galloping on horseback. 金山 chin¹ shan¹, gold-mountain, name of another hill in the neighbourhood of Peking. 萬壽山 uan¹ shou¹ shan¹, a favourite imperial villa on a hill near Peking. It was once permissible to visit the grounds but now foreigners are no longer admitted. 求雨 ch'iu² yü³ to pray for rain, as the

Emperor in time of drought does himself or by deputy, according to the gravity of the situation. 黑龍潭 *hei' lung² t'an¹*, a temple near Peking, so called because in its grounds there is a pool where a black dragon is supposed to live. The Temple is a Government one and in time of drought imperial kins are sent there to pray for rain. In this small song there is no syntaxis; the names are huddled together without distinction or explanation. The last phrase in order to express correctly the sense, ought to say in the simplest form 皇上爲求雨遣官到黑龍潭 *huang² shang¹ wei¹ ch'iu² yü³ ch'ien³ kuan¹ tao¹ hei' lung² t'an¹*. The chinese original phrase could however be translated "and the temple of *Hei-lung-t'an* where the Emperor (goes to pray for rain or) sends people to pray for rain". As a matter of fact from *Ch'ien² lung²* till now no Emporor has gone there in person to pray for rain. He prays now for it in the 大高殿 *ta¹ kao¹ tien¹*, the very high hall, in the interior of the Palace.

LXX

風來咯
雨來咯
老和尚背了鼓來咯

NOTES

When a storm is coming on with wind, rain,

and thunders Pekinese boys say these words. The thunder is supposed to be produced by the striking of a big drum like those which the wandering priests take round with them.

TRANSLATION

The wind has come — the rain has come — the old priest with the drum on his back has come.

LXXI

高高山上一顆蒿
兩個禿子去耍刀
兩把刀尖兒落在葫蘆兒上
一個葫蘆兩扇瓢

NOTES

— 一顆蒿 *i' k'o' hao'*, a stem of *artemisia*. This 蒿 is for 香蒿 *hsiang' hao'*. 禿子 *t'u'-tzü*, small boys, as explained before. 耍刀 *shua³ tao'*, to fence, to play with swords. 兩扇瓢, two gourd ladles—a gourd cut in the middle forms two ladles, used by poor people to put the rice in. The vulgar numeral is not 扇 but 個 *ko'*.

TRANSLATION

On a very high mountain there is a stem of *Artemisia* — two boys fence with swords — the two

sword points fell on a calabash — and from a calabash were made two ladles.

LXXII

香 爐 兒
瓦 燈 臺
爺 爺 兒 娶 了 個 奶 奶 兒 來
不 梳 頭
不 作 活
嘴 饒 手 懶 竟 愛 喝
爺 爺 兒 沒 法 兒 治
氣 的 竟 哆 嗦
說 我 打 你 這 個 拙 老 婆

NOTES

The first two verses are the ordinary t'ou²-tzu without any reference to what follows. 香 爐 兒 *hsiang¹ lu² 'r*, a metal or clay vessel to burn incense before the Gods; it means literally perfume-stove. 瓦 燈 臺 *ua³ teng¹ t'ai²*, a sort of earthenware oil-lamp used in very poor houses. 氣 的 *ch'i¹-ti*, he is so irritated. 哆 嗦 *tuo¹ suo¹*, to tremble, to shake with anger.

TRANSLATION

An incense-stove and an earthenware lamp —

the gentleman has married a lady — who does not comb her hair — does not work — is gluttonous and lazy and likes nothing but drinking — the husband has no way of correcting her — and is so angry that he trembles — and says: I will beat you stupid old woman !

LXXIII

小 妞 兒	錐 幫 子 兒
坐 椅 子 兒	納 底 子 兒

NOTES

Girls in poor families make their own shoes. 錐幫子 *chui pang¹ tzü*, to bore with an awl holes into the cloth for binding it to the sole. 納底子 *na¹ ti³-tzü*, to beat the sole to harden it. The sole is made of felt.

TRANSLATION

The little girl — is sitting on the chair — bores the sides of the shoe—and beats the sole of the shoe.

LXXIV

爺 爺 抱 孫 子
坐 在 波 棱 蓋 兒

羊肉包子蘸醋蒜兒
吃完了撒嬌兒
過來打你爺爺三嘴巴兒

NOTES

蘸 *chan⁴*, to dip in, said of a brush in the ink, or of meat in the sauce. 醋蒜兒 *ts'u⁴ suan¹ 'r*, sort of sauce made of vinegar and bits of garlic. 撒嬌兒 *sa¹ chiao¹ 'r*, to gambol; to tease, said of spoilt children. 嘴巴 *tsuei³ pa¹*, a blow in the face.

TRANSLATION

The grandfather embraces his grandson — who sits on his knees — (the grandfather says) here are meat-balls to dip in vinegar sauce — when you have finished eating you will be saucy — and will come over to hit your grandfather three blows in the face.

LXXV

小脚兒娘
愛吃糖
沒錢兒買
搬着小脚兒哭一場

NOTES

搬脚 pan¹ chiao³, to sit down with crossed legs holding the feet in the hands. Children often sit so when disappointed and weeping.

TRANSLATION.

The little lady with the small feet — likes to eat sugar — but has no money to buy it — and sits crosslegged and weeps for a good while.

LXXVI

高	高	山	上	一	座	樓			
兩	個	姑	娘	去	梳	頭			
大	姐	梳	的	盤	龍	髻			
二	姐	梳	的	賽	花	樓			
三	姐	沒	的	梳					
一	梳	梳	了	個	獅	子	滾	繡	毬
大	姐	坐	的	是	金	板	凳		
二	姐	坐	的	是	銀	板	凳		
剩	下	三	姐	沒	的	坐			
一	坐	坐	在	一	盤	磨			
大	姐	抱	着	個	金	娃	子		
二	姐	抱	着	個	銀	娃	子		

三 姐 沒 得 抱
一 抱 抱 着 個 樹 磕 杈

NOTES

盤龍髻 p'an² lung² chi', sort of women's head dress; literally coiled dragon chignon. 賽花樓 sai' hua' lou², another sort of head dress very high and adorned with flowers; it means literally "tower which emulate the flowers". 獅子滾繡毬 shih' tzā kun³ hsiou' ch'iu², "a lion who rolls an embroidered ball" sort of amusement in the fairs. Two men dress themselves as lions and then fight, in the same time pushing with the feet a large embroidered ball. Here the phrase is used in the meaning of "confused, not well done, ruffled". — 盤磨 i' p'an² muo', a mill-stone.

TRANSLATION

On a very high mountain there is a high tower — two girls go there to comb their hair — the eldest sister combs her hair into a "coiled dragon chignon" — The second sister combs her hair into a "rivalling flowers tower chignon" — the third sister has no other way of combing her hair — and combs it in a ruffled way — the first sister sits on a golden stool — the second sister sits on a silver stool — there remains the third sister who has no room to sit — and sits on a stone-mill — the first sister folds in her arms a golden baby — the second

sister folds in her arms a silver baby — the third sister has nothing to fold in the arms — and folds a forked branch.

LXXVII

駱	駝	駱	駝	噓	噓
王	八	是	你	哥	哥
駱	駝	駱	駝	拜	拜
王	八	是	你	太	太
駱	駝	駱	駝	抽	鼻兒
王	八	是	你	小	姨兒

NOTES

Pekinese boys address these words to camels, which are well tempered enough not to take any notice of them. 噓噓 *so' so'*, signal given to the camels to make them kneel down, to receive the load on their back. The word is probably derived from the word *sok* used by Mongol camel drivers. The same word is however used to call a dog to come. 拜拜 *pai' pai'*, to salute as women do; here the words refer to the awkward movement of the camels when kneeling down. 抽鼻兒 *ch'ou' pi' r*, to sniff, as camels use to do. 小姨兒 *hsiao' i' r*, a man's wife's younger sister.

TRANSLATION

Camel, camel, kneel down — a turtle is your
older brother — camel, camel, make a salute — a
turtle is your wife — camel, camel, sniff — a turtle
is your sister-in-law.

LXXVIII

你 媽 七
我 媽 八
你 媽 小 脚 兒 開 黃 花
左 一 盤 兒
右 一 盤 兒
你 媽 肚 子 裏 有 小 孩 兒
多 大 了
曾 走 了
你 媽 肚 子 裏 又 有 了

NOTES

Two things are to be observed in the first two verses. Apparently there is nothing wrong in them but it is quite the contrary. Ladies generally avoid pronouncing in succession the numbers seven *ch'i* and eight *pa*¹, because, these two syllables put together, give a sound very similar to that of an

equivocal word largely spoken by Chinamen. Now in this case the two syllables are separated but no Chinese will fail to understand the meaning of it, so much more that translating the numerals simply as they are, would convey no meaning in the two first verses. Again—the word 八 that is to say the number eight, has been chosen by Chinese to mean what in higher style would be called 玉門 yü⁴ men². Therefore the meaning of the second verse cannot be an edifying one. 開黃花, k'ai¹ huang² hua¹, “to open yellow flowers” it seems that in Pekinese slang a “yellow flower foot” means a small foot. — 盤兒 i¹ p'an² 'r, a tour, a walk.

TRANSLATION

Your mother “seven” — your mother “eight” —
your mother has small feet — a tour to the left —
and a tour to the right — your mother is in a family
way — “how old is the baby”? — “he can walk”
— your mother is again in a family way.

LXXIX

桃 樹 葉 兒 尖
荷 花 葉 兒 圓
梔 子 開 花 兒 喚 牡 丹
仙 人 掌 手 拿 三 棱 兒 草
淑 氣 花 開 挨 了 一 頓 霸 王 鞭

NOTES

仙人掌 *hsien¹ jen² chang*, a cactus, (*Opuntia Dillenii*). 三棱草 *san¹ leng² ts'ao³*, lit. "grass with three edges" a three-cornered sedge (*Cyperus*). 淑氣花 *shu² ch'i⁴ hua¹*, called in vulgar language 蜀角 *shou² chiao⁴* (the original pronunciation and tones ought to be *shu³ chiao³*), the hollyhock (lat. *Althaea rosea*). 霸王鞭 *pa¹ uang² pien¹*, tyrant's whip, a sort of cactus, called so because of its resemblance to an iron whip property of a king of the Ch'u 楚 kingdom, renowned for his bodily strength, named 項羽 *Hsiang⁴ yū³*. In the last verse the phrase has a double meaning as 挨一頓鞭 *ai² i¹ tun¹ pien¹*, means to receive a number of whip blows.

TRANSLATION

The peach tree leaves are pointed — the lotus leaves are round — the gardenia opens its flowers and calls the peony tree flower — the cactus (the wise man's palm) holds in its hands the three cornered sedge — the hollyhock flower opens and receives a good many blows from the "tyrant's whip".

LXXX

小 小 子 兒
拿 倒 錘 兒

開	開	怯	屋	子	兩	扇	門	兒
八	仙	棹	子	兒	漆	椅	子	兒
足	登	着	脚	搭	子	兒		
水	滿	壺	兒					
洗	竄	子	菜	有	名	景		
四	樣	兒	嫩	韭	菜			
嫩	根	兒	蝦	仁	兒			
八	大	燴	鴨	子	個	道	人	兒
燒	猪	燒	娘	是	素	席	兒	
天	上	大	席	擺	飽	了		
撒	下	葷	娘	吃				
叫	聲	大						
上	南	台						
聽	大	戲	兒					
芭	蕉	扇	子	兒				
打	蚊	子	兒					

NOTES

拿倒 *na² tao¹*, to hold a thing just in the opposite way form that in which it ought to be held, for instance taking a sword by the point. 錘 *ch'ui²*, a toy for boys which imitates an ancient weapon to be seen now only on the theatres, it is formed of a large ball of iron to which is attached a handle, and can be compared to our mace used in the middle ages. 怯屋子 *ch'ie¹ wu¹ tzü*, a common, plain room, as of labourers in the fields. 八仙棹子 *pa¹ hsien¹ chuo¹ tzü*, a table for eight persons. 漆椅子 *ch'¹ i³ tzü*,

lacquered chairs. 腳搭子 chiao³ ta' tzu, a small four-legged stool to lay the feet on. 竈子 ts'uan' tzu, very vulgar name for a kettle. 名景 ming² ching³, fame, renown. 嫩根兒 nen' ken'r, with delicate stems. 韭菜 chiou³ ts'ai', leeks. 八大 pa' ta' instead of 八大碗 pa' ta' wan³, the eight entries in a good chinese dinner. The verse is very laconic. 燴蝦仁兒 huei' hsia' jen'r, shrimp pulp with sauce. 天大娘 t'ien' shang' ta' niang², a fairy in heaven, but here very probably a term of flattery for a nun. 道人兒 tao' jen'r, said also in relation to above, a person who has reached the perfection of reason, a holy person. 葷席 hun' hsi³, a dinner comprising meat and food, which persons in monastic life should abstain from eating. 南台 nan² t'ai³, the theatre placed on the Southern side. 芭蕉 pa' chiao', palm tree, 打蚊子 ta³ uen²-tzu, to drive away the sandflies.

TRANSLATION

The small boy — holding the mace by the head — opens the two leaves of the door of the plain room — (inside there are) one table for eight people and varnished chairs — he leans his feet on a small footstool — the tea pot is overfilled with water — and washes the kettle — four sorts of food are there spread out — delicate leeks with delicate stems — and eight plates with sauced shrimp pulp — pork with sauce and roasted duck — (the nun) like the great lady in heaven is a holy person — and she has the common food removed and vegetable food

prepared — people call out: the great lady has eaten to fullness — and goes to the Southern stage — to see the play — and with a palm-leaf fan — strikes away the mosquitoes.

LXXXI

高高山上一顆藤
有個吉了兒往上爬
我問吉了兒爬怎的
他說渴了要吃藤

NOTES

吉了兒 *chi² liao³r*, the cicada, correctly written 蟬螳兒. 怎的 *tse³ ti*, antiquated form for 怎麼着 *tsem³ mo cho*, how? why? 吃藤 *ch'ih¹ ma²*, to eat hemp, a curious way of letting thirst pass away.

TRANSLATION

On a very high mountain there is a stem of hemp — there is a cicada who creeps on it — I ask the cicada, why do you creep on? — and she says: I am thirsty and want to eat hemp.

LXXXII

好熱天兒
掛竹簾兒

歪 脖 兒 樹 底 下
有 個 妞 兒 哄 着 我 頑 兒
穿 着 一 件 大 紅 坎 肩 兒
沒 有 沿 邊 兒
梳 油 頭
別 玉 簪 兒
左 手 拿 着 玉 花 籃 兒
右 手 拿 着 梔 子 茉莉 串 枝 蓮 兒

NOTES

歪脖兒樹 uai' puo²r shu', "trees with a crooked neck" crooked trees. 大紅 ta' hung², deep red. 沿邊兒 yen² pien¹r, coloured border of ladies dresses. 油頭 iu² t'ou² a hairdress combed with odorous oil. 別 pie², there is no particular character for the meaning; it means to wear pins in the hair as women do. 花籃兒 hua' lan²r, a flower basket.

TRANSLATION

What a hot day — set up the bamboo curtain !
— under the crooked trees — there is a small girl
who plays and jests with me — she wears a deep
red waistcoat — without coloured border — she
has combed her hair with oil — and has stuck jade
pins into her hair — in the left hand she holds a
flower basket — and in the right hand she holds
gardenias, jasmine and wild lotus flowers.

LXXXIII

羊 巴 巴 蛋 兒
用 脚 撮
你 是 兄 來 我 是 哥
打 壺 酒 兒 併 們 倆 人 喝
喝 醉 了
打 老 婆
吹 鼻 兒 打 鼓 再 娶 一 個

NOTES

The beginning of this song is nasty but I could not cut it off the song. 羊巴巴蛋兒 *yang² pa³ pa³ tan'r*, goat dung — 打壺酒兒 *ta³ hu² chiou³*, to go to buy a bottle of wine. 鼻兒 *pi²r*, the mouth of a flute, therefore 吹鼻兒 *ch'ui¹ pi²r*, means to play the flute or other wind instrument. This phrase alludes to the band of players which accompanies the chair of a bride.

TRANSLATION

Goat's dung — crushed by the foot — you are my second brother and I am your first brother — go and buy a bottle of wine; we will both drink it — when I am drunk — I will beat my wife — and then with flute-players and drummers I will marry another.

LXXXIV

高	高	山	上	有	個	小	廟	兒											
裏	頭	住	着	個	神	道	兒												
頭	戴	草	帽	兒															
身	穿	藍	罩	兒															
腿	穿	皮	套	兒															
腰	繫	草	要	兒															
四	個	小	鬼	抬	轎	兒													
兩	個	來	鬼	囓	兒	哇	溫	兒	哇	兒	號	兒							
解	南	提	了	一	個	青	春	年	少	吊	兒								
手	裏	兒	溜	千	張	元	寶	兩											
進	個	懷		兒															
求	我	懷	抱	抱	還	罷	了												
給	把	我	懷	抱	兒														
不	火	火		兒	燒	你	的	小	廟	兒									
點	花	兒	兒	聞	聽	心	好	惱											
灰	兒	小	鬼	春	發	票	兒												
神	道	青	春	年	年	少	兒												
叫	聲	青	春	冒	泡	兒													
快	拿	咕																	
嚇	的																		
咕	鄰																		

NOTES

罩兒 *chao'ir*, very thin overcoat which the Chinese

wear over their clothes. 草要兒 *ts'ao³ yao⁴'r*, sort of rope made of dry grass to bind vegetables together, and in this case as a girdle. 溫兒哇 *weur¹ wa¹*, imitates the sound of the trumpet. 吹號 for 吹號筒 *ch'ui¹ hao⁴ t'ung³*, to blow the trumpet. 青春 *ch'ing¹ ch'un*, the pure spring, the flower of life, youth. 千張 *ch'ien¹ chang¹*, a paper ladder burned in ceremonies in order to give the spirits a way to ascend to heaven. 元寶兩吊 *yüan² pao³ liang³ tiao⁴*, two strings of paper money, resembling the silver yüan-pao, which the Chinese burn for their dead and in other offerings. 懷抱兒 *huai² pao⁴'r*, something to carry in the bosom, a child. — 把火 *i¹ pa⁴ huo³*, a bundle of combustible matter for obtaining a fire. 灰兒花兒 *hui¹'r hua¹'r*, wants to imitate the noise of a conflagration. 發票 *fa¹ p'iao⁴*, to issue a warrant to arrest a man. 冒泡兒 *mao⁴ p'ao⁴'r*, to gasp and let air out of the mouth as fish does when just taken out of the water; that is said to show the agonizing fear of the young girl. 咕嚕咕嚕 *ku¹ ta¹ ku¹ ta¹*, imitates the gurgling round of the air gasping out of the throat.

TRANSLATION

On a very high mountain — there is a small temple — inside is sitting a holy man — who wears on his head a dry grass hat — and on his body an azure cloak — and on his legs skin leggings — and round his waist a grass rope for girdle — four small devils bear the chair — two small devils blow the

trumpet — from the South has come a young girl in the bloom of life — who has in her hands a paper ladder and paper money — she enters the temple — to pray for a child — (she says :) give me a child and it shall be all right — if you do not give me a child — I will make a fire — and burn your small temple — the holy man hearing this is very much angry — and calls for the small devils to issue a warrant of arrest — (saying) quickly apprehend this young woman in the bloom of life, — but the young woman in the bloom of life is so scared that she gasps for breath.

LXXXV

有 個 妞 兒 不 害 羞
 管 着 賣 花 的 叫 舅 舅
 舅 舅 舅 舅 給 我 一 朶 紅 石 榴
 懷 裏 揣
 袖 裏 袖
 利 利 拉 拉 一 大 溜

NOTES

揣 ch'uai, means to feel, to grope, and also to hide in the bosom, as Chinese do because of their not having pockets. 袖 hsiou', a sleeve, and also, to place in the sleeve 利利拉拉 li' li' la' la' — without interruption-without end. 一大溜 i' ta' liu', a great row a great number of.

TRANSLATION

There is a small girl who does not feel ashamed
— and calls the flower seller her own uncle — uncle,
uncle give me a flower of the red pomegranate —
I will put it in my bosom — I will put it in my sleeve
— and all the ground shall be strown with flowers.

LXXXVI

有	個	小	禿	兒	本	姓	高
初	一	十	五	把	香	燒	
人	家	燒	香	爲	兒	女	
禿	子	燒	香	爲	長	毛	
到	了	三	天	毛	長	上	
又	燒	香					
又	掛	袍					
到	了	三	天	毛	掉	了	
搬	倒	了	老	爺	架	火	燒
老	爺	一	見	冲	冲	怒	
拿	起	大	刀	就	開	瓢	

NOTES

The Chinese are accustomed to burn incense on the first and fifteenth of a month. 爲長毛 uei⁴ chang⁴ mao², to make the hair grow. 掛袍 kua¹ p'ao², "to put on Buddha's body a jacket". Some people who want to get a favour from the Divinity, to soothe

him, buy a silk or satin jacket which they themselves put on his body. 搬倒了 pan' tao³ la, he upset the God. 老爺 lao³ ye², Mister, Sir, gentleman, here it is instead of 關老爺 kuan' lao³ ye², the God of war. 架 chia⁴, to lean the object on a stand, here in order to burn it completely. 冲冲怒 ch'ung' ch'ung' nu⁴, in great irritation.

TRANSLATION.

There was a small bald-headed man, whose name was Kao — who went to burn incense on the first and on the fifteenth — people burn incense to get a son or a daughter — but the baldheaded man burns incense to make his hair grow — after three days the hair was growing — and he burns incense — and dresses the God with a new jacket — after three days the hair fell off — and he upset the Kuantı statue and placed him against a stand to burn him — But Kuantı seeing that, was awfully irritated — he took up his great halberd and split the man's calebash (head) into two ladles.

LXXXVII

立 立 立 立 站 兒
上 河 沿 兒
一 個 猪 劈 兩 半 兒
你 一 半 兒
我 一 半 兒
打 酒 就 酒 菜 兒

NOTES

The first word *li* is repeated four times for the sake of the rhythm. 就酒菜兒 *chiou⁴ chiou³ ts'ai¹r*, to accompany the food which is generally taken whilst drinking wine; here it alludes to the pig's head.

TRANSLATION

I top here — go on the banks of the river — of a pig's head we will make two portions — you will get a half — and I will get a half — and we will go and buy wine to suit the wine-food.

LXXXVIII

鑼 鍋 兒 橋
萬 壽 山
鎮 海 銅 牛 在 上 邊
賣 豆 腐 腦 兒 的
喝 喝 連 連 在 海 淀

NOTES

This song is not very intelligible; names of places are put together without any apparent reason. 鎮 *chen¹*, to protect against bad luck and danger. 鎮物 *chen¹ u¹*, an object which counteracts evil influences. The brass ox which is spoken of here is on the shore of the lake *k'un¹ ming² hu²* and is there to oppose the danger which chinese believe would arise from the overflowing of the lake. In the lake there is suppo-

sed to be a 海眼 *hai³ yen³*, that is to say a “sea-eye” a hole in the bottom of the lake which communicates with the sea, and out of which all the sea water would rise and overflow the country. The lake 昆明湖 *k'un¹ ming² hu²* is in the Haitien in the neighbourhood of Peking. 在上邊 *tzai¹ shang¹ pien¹*, on the shore. 豆腐腦 *tou¹ fu³ nao³*, sort of bean-curd. 喝喝 *ho¹ ho¹*, cries of vendors in the street. 連連 *lien² lien²*, without interruption.

TRANSLATION

The hunchback bridge — Wan-shou-shan — the brass oxen on the shore, which protects the country from the sea water — the vendors of bean curd — go along crying their ware without interruption.

LXXXIX

黑	老	婆	兒						
滿	地	滾							
喚	着	他	男	人	不	買	粉		
買	了	粉	他	不	搽				
喚	着	他	男	人	不	買	蔴		
買	了	蔴	他	不	打				
喚	着	他	男	人	不	買	馬		
買	了	馬	他	不	餵				
喚	着	他	男	人	不	買	櫃		
買	了	櫃	他	不	盛				

嗔 着 他 男 人 不 買 繩
買 了 繩 他 上 吊
嚇 了 他 男 人 一 大 跳

NOTES

滿地滾 *man³ ti' kun³*, rolls all over the ground.
嗔着 *ch'en' cho²*, speaking angrily, scolding. 打蔴
ta³ ma², to beat the hemp, to take away the bark from
the stems. 盛 here read *ch'eng²*, to fill something
with, to put, to place in. 上吊 *shang' tiao⁴*, to hang
oneself.

TRANSLATION

The old brown woman — rolls herself all over the ground — scolding because her husband does not buy cosmetic for her — but when he has bought cosmetic then she does not use it — scolding because her husband does not buy hemp for her — when he has bought hemp, then she does not thrash it — scolding because her husband does not buy a horse — when he has bought a horse, she does not feed it — scolding because her husband does not buy a wardrobe — when he has bought the wardrobe, she does not put her things there — scolding because her husband has not bought a cord — when he has bought a cord, she hangs herself — and frightens her husband to death.

XC

小 小 子 兒
胖 咕 圖 墜 兒
骹 臂 上 戴 着 個 金 鐲 子 兒
身 穿 紅 兜 肚 綠 褲 子 兒
腦 袋 瓜 兒 梳 着 個 歪 毛 兒
一 笑 倆 酒 窩
一 走 一 哆 嗦
拉 着 姐 姐 偕 們 買 果 子

NOTES

胖咕圖墜兒 p'ang⁴ ku¹ lun¹ tun¹'r, fat and round, said of a child. 兜肚 tou¹ tu¹, a covering for the stomach worn by children. 腦袋瓜兒 nao³ tai¹ kua¹'r, the head, the skull, a jocular expression. 歪毛兒 uai¹ mao²'r, a round tuft of hair which small boys wear either on the right or on the left of the head. 酒窩兒 chiu³ uo¹'r, dimples in the cheek.

TRANSLATION

The very little boy — is round and fat — he wears a gold bracelet on his arm — and wears a red stomach protector and green trowsers — on his head he wears a tuft of hair — when he laughs two dimples appear on his cheeks — when he walks all his body trembles — and taking the elder sister by the hand says: elder sister, let us go and buy fruit.

XCI

黃⁶⁴城根兒
 一溜門兒
 門口兒站着個小妞兒
 有個意思兒
 白布汗襖兒藍布褲子兒
 耳朶上戴着排環墜兒
 頭上梳的是大抓髻兒
 搽着胭脂兒
 抹着粉兒
 誰是我的小女婿兒

NOTES

皇城 *huang² ch'eng²*, the wall which goes round the imperial city. 城根兒 *ch'eng² ken¹'r*, near the wall, opposite to it. 妞兒 *niu¹-jen²*, rather affected for the sake of rhyme instead of the simple 妞兒 *niu¹'r*. 有個意思兒 *iou³ ko⁴ i¹ ssu¹'r*, there is a thought, it is amusing pleasant to look at it and to think of it. 排環墜兒 *p'ai² huan² chuei⁴'r*, a sort of earrings for women. 搽胭脂 *ch'a¹ yen¹*, to rub rose cosmetic on the cheeks or on the palms of the hands. 抹粉 *muo³ fen³*, to rub white cosmetic powder on the cheeks. 小女婿兒 *hsiao³ nu³ hsü¹*, a small son-in-law, said to a girl to mean her bridegroom.

TRANSLATION

Near the wall of the imperial town — there is

a row of doors — near a door there stands a small girl — she is really nice — with a shirt of white cloth and trowsers of blue cloth — she wears round earrings — and has a great chignon on her head — on the face she has rubbed red powder — and white powder — who shall be my little bridegroom?

XCII

簷 蝙蝠
穿 花 鞋

你 是 奶 奶 兒
我 是 爺

NOTES

The first two verses are the common introduction without definite meaning. 簷蝙蝠 the bat is called in suhua yen¹ pien¹ hu³, but the regular pronunciation ought to be yen² pien¹ fu³. As to the fact of wearing embroidered shoes, the chinese explain as follows: sometimes in order to catch a bat, a shoe is thrown in the air, and the bat himself runs into the shoe and so falls to the ground and is taken. Very likely the need of a rhyme has forced in the whole phrase.

TRANSLATION

The bat — wears embroidered shoes — you are a wife — and I am a husband.

XCIH

老 太 太 叫 貓
 花 兒 花 兒 花 兒 狐 狸 哟
 我 們 的 貓 有 名 兒
 鞭 打 繡 球 金 鑲 玉
 雪 裏 送 炭 四 個 銀 蹄
 有 人 要 偷 了 我 們 的 貓 兒 去
 抽 了 你 的 筋 來
 剝 了 你 的 皮

NOTES

花 兒 花 兒 *hua'r hua'r*, is equivalent to the english puss ! puss ! to call a cat. 花 兒 狐 狸 *hua'r hu² li²* striped fox-the name of one of the cats belonging to the lady. 鞭 打 繡 球 *pien¹ ta³ hsiou⁴ ch'iu²*, means literally "a whip that beats the embroidered ball". The coats of cats have different curious names to distinguish them. This phrase means a cat which has a black tail and a black spot on the forehead, meaning that with his long black tail (the whip) he strikes the black spot on the forehead (the embroidered ball). 金 鑲 玉 *chin¹ hsiang¹ yü⁴*, another name for a cat's coat "jade inlaid with gold" a cat with a white coat with yellow spots. 雪 裏 送 炭 *hsüe³ li³ sung¹ t'an¹*, another name, literally explained "coal sent in the snow" a black coat with four white paws. 銀 蹄 *in²-t'i²*, a silver hoof, said of white hoofs and paws.

TRANSLATION

NOTES

This song is supposed to be sung by a small boy who innocently relates the strife between father and mother. In China although the family laws are severe and different from ours, yet there exists a sufficient number of henpecked husbands. A number of anecdotes regarding uxorious husbands are currently spread. 秦椒 *ch'in² chiao¹*, chillies (lat. *Capsicum annuum*); very likely here the house wife is not wrongly likened to the chillies. 爸爸 *pa¹ pa¹*, common appellation for father, and the same as our papa. 頂着燈 *ting³-cho¹-teng¹*, bearing a lamp on the head; a henpecked husband is jestingly supposed to kneel down before his wife, who orders him as a punishment to stay a long time in that position, with an oil-lamp on his head. So the husband must endure the pain of being scalded by the oil that drops down from the lamp and runs on his back. This notion is so generally known and jested about that one of the must common tricks to produce general hilarity is to alarm a friend by saying he has got oil-stains on his back. Everybody understands what fictions that alludes to. 油 *iu²*, for oil is intended here the product of the melting of wax. — 袋烟 *i¹ tai¹ yen¹*, a pipe filled with tobacco. 孩兒他媽 *hai²r t'a¹ ma¹*, “the children’s mother” title given by the husband to a wife who has born children to him. The wife in her turn calls the husband 孩兒他爸爸 *hai²r t'a¹ pa¹ pa¹*, the children’s father. Two abridged phrases for that are 他媽 and 他爹.

TRANSLATION

The small chillies — how could they not be bitter? — when my father catches sight of my mother, he is afraid — he kneels down with a lamp on his head, — and is also afraid lest the oil should run down, or the candle should fall — when my mother wants to wash her feet — my father runs forward — when he has taken down the socks he says that it is scented — if he says it is bad smelling he gets a slap on the face — when he has filled her pipe — and handed over to her a cup of tea — my mother is so delighted that she shows her teeth — my father has once called her : o mother of my children — old lady, forgive me, now — if you are going to get angry again, I will roll away — and from now henceforward I will never come back home.

XCV

蒿子燈
荷葉燈

今兒點
明兒個扔

NOTES

On the fifteenth day of the seventh moon is celebrated the Feast of the Spirits 中元節 *chung¹ yüan² chie³*. In the evening many lanterns are lighted on the streets. 蒿子燈 *hao¹ tzü³ teng¹*, it is not a lantern but a whole plant of artemisia on the branches of which incense sticks are bound and then lighted.

荷葉燈 *ho² ye¹ teng¹*, another lantern formed of a leaf of lotus on which a candle has been fixed.

TRANSLATION

The artemisia lantern — and the lotus-lantern — to day they are lighted — and to-morrow they are thrown away.

XCVI

小 三 兒 他 媽
頂 房 柁
窩 樞 眼
挺 長 脖
穿 着 一 件 破 衫 襖
窟 窿 兒 大
補 丁 多
渾 身 的 鈕 子 沒 有 兩 個
告 訴 你 媽 嫁 了 我 罷
又 得 吃 來 又 得 喝

NOTES

頂 *ting³*, to reach with the head. 房柁 *fang² t'uo²*, the principal beam in the roof. 樞 *k'ou¹* means here sunken, deep and 窩樞眼 *uo¹ k'ou¹ yen³*, sunken eyes. 挺 *t'ing³*, character used to form the superlative in very common language, used instead of 頂 *ting³*.

移襖 *tuo³ luo²*, sort of old dress consisting of a long gown with a high collar, worn in winter time.
補丁 *pu³ ting¹*, patches. A chinese coat has never more than six buttons.

TRANSLATION

Sar's mother — is as tall as the roof — has sunken eyes — and a very long neck — she wears a broken overcoat — with big holes — and many patches — on her whole person there are not even two buttons — now, tell your mother to marry me! — she will get food and drink.

XCVII

小耗子兒	偷油吃
上燈台	下不來

TRANSLATION

The small mouse — has climbed up the candlestick — to steal oil to eat — and now cannot come down.

XCVIII

兩枝蠟	
一股香	
二十三日	祭竈王
一碟兒	草料

一 碗 水
 潑 在 地 下 上 天 堂
 當 家 的 過 來 把 頭 叩
 三 聲 爆 竹 响 叮 噹
 竈 王 爺
 回 來 罷 回 來 罷
 給 你 留 着 關 東 糖

NOTES

This song speaks about the ceremony for the God of the stove on the 23rd day of the twelfth moon. Before the God's picture incense is burning and on the table there is a dish containing water, and one with grass which is supposed to serve for the God's horse. The water then is thrown to the ground and the grass in the air. That means the end of this ceremony. **當家的** tang¹ chia¹ ti, the oldest man in the family who is called to perform the sacrifices and all religious ceremonies. **天堂** t'ien¹ t'ang², the Heavenly hall, the paradise. **爆竹** p'ao¹ chu², fire crackers. **响叮噹** hsiang³ ting¹ tang¹, the noise is ting-tang; **關東糖** kuan¹-tung¹ t'ang², Manchurian sugar. The Chinese offer sugar to this God, with the aim of letting his teeth stick together and so prevent him from relating to Heaven all the inconvenience and misdeed he had occasion to see in the family during twelve months; with this hope, the Chinese merrily begin their New-year.

TRANSLATION

Two candles — a bundle of incense sticks — on the 23^d day it is sacrificed to the God of the hearth — there is a dish full of grass — and a dish full of water — when the water is thrown on the ground the God ascends to Heaven — the eldest of the family comes over and knocks his head on the ground — then three volleys of crackers with a great noise — God of the hearth — come back ! come back ! — we keep for you Manchurian sugar.

XCIX

八仙棹兒
四角兒方
盤子碗兒擺在中央
燒豬燒鴨子東坡肉
保府帶來的八寶香腸

NOTES

四角兒 *ssu⁴ chiao²r*, with four corners. 中央 *chung yang¹*, in the middle—the word *yang¹* is pronounced vulgarly *yang²*. 東坡肉 *tung¹ p'uo¹ jou⁴*, sort of meat prepared in a special way as directed by a certain old literary man who was a great authority also on kitchen matters. His name was 蘇軾 *Su¹-shih⁴* and his surname, hao, was *Tung p'uo¹*. 保府 *Pao³-fu³* is instead of 保定府 *Pao³ ting⁴ fu³*, the head

prefecture in the Chih-li province. 八寶香腸 *pa¹ pao³ hsiang¹ ch'ang²* "the odorous sausages with eight treasures" a sort of sausages made of pork stuffed into chicken's intestines. The eight treasures alluded to are the spices, aromas which are in the stuff. These sausages come from Pao-ting-fu.

TRANSLATION

A table for eight persons — with four corners square — plates and cups are placed in the middle of it — roast pork, roast duck, and meat prepared à la Tung-p'uo — and sausages from Pao-ting-fu.

C

喜兒喜兒吃豆腐
小雞兒過來賺把穀
狗兒汪汪要看家
貓兒過來會撲鼠

NOTES

喜兒 *hsi²r* stands for 喜雀 *hsi² ch'iao³*, the magpie. 賺 *ch'ien¹*, to peck. 汪汪 *uang¹ uang¹*, imitates the noise of barking. 撲鼠 *p'u¹ shu³*, to rush on mice, to catch mice as cats do. These words are repeated by children when they catch sight of magpies.

TRANSLATION

The magpie, the magpie eats beancurd — the chicken comes over and pecks a handful of grain —

the dog barks and wants to look after the house —
the cat comes over and wants to catch the mice.

CI

喜兒喜兒買豆腐
該我的錢
臘月二十五

NOTES

Chinese accounts and debts are paid at the end of every quarter and the great bulk of money accounts ought to be paid, in the 12th month from the 25th day to the 30th at midnight.

TRANSLATION

The magpie, the magpie buys beancurd — those who owe me money — (I shall see them) on the 25th day of the 12th moon.

CII

顧不得一時睡着
你損槍
我損鎬
上南窪
刨元寶

一	创	创	出	個	大	蒲	包
隔	着	蒲	包	望	裏	照	
金	元	寶	銀	元	寶		
金	鋼	鑽	兒				
兩	大	簪					
砌	珊	子	樹	兩	丈	高	
要	買	人	怕	逃	跑		
要	買	房	子	怕	火	燒	
要	買	驢	怕	倒	槽		
要	開	當	鋪	眼	力	兒	潮
要	開	錢	棹	子	沒	人	兒
東	邊	兒	模				保
西	邊	兒	模				
模	了	個	青	頭	愣	的	蠍
螯	的	我	鬼	哭	神	豪	子

NOTES

The song relates a dream. 顧不得 *ku' pu' to²*, without apercceiving it; insensibly. 鎬 *kao³*, said also 鋤頭 *chüe³ t'ou²*, a hoe. The first character is not noted in dictionaries. 创 *p'ao²*, to dig the ground with a hoe. 蒲包 *p'u² pao¹*, a bundle made of rushes. 金鋼石 *chin¹ kang¹ shih²*, the diamond. 金鋼鑽兒 *chin¹ kang¹ tsuan¹'r*, the diamond-pointed awl used by menders of crockery. 倒槽 *tao³ ts'ao²*, said of animals "to die near the manger, in the stable". 眼力兒潮 *yen³ li¹'r ch'ao²*, lit. the strenght of the eyes

is damp, that is to say we have not eyes good enough to distinguish good objects from bad ones - a faculty which is necessary in such an establishment as a pawn-shop. The word *ch'ao²* has also in other cases the meaning of not up to, insufficient, as in 潮銀子 *ch'ao² yin² tzu*, bad silver, with too much alloy. 錢棹子 *ch'ien² cho¹-tzu*, lit. "money-table" a bank authorized to issue small banknotes and guaranteed by other banks. 摸 *muo¹*, to feel with the hands, read here vulgarly *ma²*. 鬼哭神嚎 *kuei³ k'u¹ shen² hao²*, "the devils weep and the spirits wail" that is "in a very painful way".

TRANSLATION

Without perceiving it in a moment I fell asleep — (I dreamed) you had shouldered a gun — and I shouldered a hoe — and went to the South morass — to dig out silver ingots — and digging we dug out a big rush wrapper — through the rush wrapper we looked in — there were gold ingots and silver ingots — and two large buckets of diamonds — and two coral trees two chang high — but if we buy servants I am afraid they would run away — if we buy houses I am afraid they would burn — if we buy an ass, I am afraid he would die near the manger — if we open a pawn-shop, we have not eyes good enough for that — if we open a money-shop, there is none who will guarantee us — but feeling for the East — and feeling for the West — I felt a big ugly

scorpion — which bit me so painfully that it made me scream.

CIHI

小 大 姐
 小 二 姐
 你 拉 胡 琴 我 打 鐵
 掙 了 錢 兒
 腰 裏 掖
 買 個 蒲 包 兒 瞧 乾 爹
 乾 爹 戴 着 紅 纓 帽
 乾 兒 穿 着 厚 底 兒 鞋
 走 一 步
 格 登 登
 扎 蝴蝶 兒 鴨 蛋 青

NOTES

拉胡琴兒 *la¹-hu²-ch'in³r*, to play the tartar fiddle.
 打鐵 *ta³ t'ie³*, to beat the iron, to work the iron. 腰
 裏掖 *yao¹ li³ye¹*, to hide, to place something in the
 waist. — These baskets made of rushes are especi-
 ally used for containing objects for gifts. 格登登
ko² teng¹ teng¹ imitates the noise of the shoes slapping
 on the ground. 鴨蛋青 *ya¹ tan¹ ch'ing¹*, of the same
 colour as the eggs of ducks.

TRANSLATION

You the first small young lady — and I the second small young lady — you play on the fiddle — and I will strike the iron — when we will have gained money — we will put it in the waist — we will buy a rush basket and will go to see our adopted father — Our adopted father has a red fringed hat — and our adopted mother has shoes with a thick sole — at every step — the creaking is heard — the butterflies embroidered on the shoes are of duck's egg colour.

CIV

新 姑 娘 十 幾 咯
 婆 婆 家 要 娶 了
 一 對 兒 龍
 一 對 兒 鳳
 金 瓜 鉞 斧 朝 天 鐙
 小 紅 鞋 兒
 蝴 蝶 兒 夢
 跳 了 棹 子 上 板 凳

NOTES

The dragon is compared to the bridegroom and the phoenix bird to the bride. In the marriage cortege there are taken round a pair of banners on which the dragon is painted and another pair on

which is painted the phoenix. 金瓜 chin¹ kua¹, gilt wood gourd stuck to the end of a pole and taken round. 錢斧 yüe¹ fu³, a sort of wooden axe. 朝天鐙 ch'ao³ t'ien¹ teng¹, a stirrup iron turned upside down and stuck on a pole. 小紅鞋兒 hsiao³ hung² hsie³r, red satin shoes worn by the bride. 蝴蝶兒夢 hu² tier² r meng¹, the Dream of the butterflies, name of a pattern of shoes on which butterflies are embroidered.

TRANSLATION

The bride is ten years and more — the mother-in-law wants to take her home — a pair of dragon flags — and a pair of phoenix flags — and gilt gourds, gilt axes, and reversed stirrups. — (the bride wears) small red shoes — and she jumps on the table and then on the bench.

CV

有邊兒有邊兒真有邊兒
藍布的大衫兒
青坎肩兒
時興花兒的褲子賽糧船兒

NOTES

These words describe the toilet of a small girl.
有邊兒 iou³ pien¹r, slang phrase which means to be

very nice, to be first rate. 衫兒 shan¹'r, read here shan³'r, a summer thin bodice. 時興 shih² hsing¹, the fashion. 賽糧船兒 sai¹ liang² ch'uan²'r, bigger, larger than a ship used to bring the grain tributes.

TRANSLATION

She is first rate, first rate, really first rate! — with a great bodice of azure cloth — and a brown waistcoat — and trowsers with a new pattern, as large as a rice junk.

CVI

出了門兒好喪氣
瞧了個兔子倒慙氣
剛要拿槍打
看了一看
是個拉屎的

NOTES

In Peking, generally acknowledged to be the dirtiest city in the world, it is not an uncommon sight to see people stopping on the public streets to perform the duties of nature. The Chinese do not resent it but the boys have composed these few verses which they sing loudly, when the occasion arises

of insulting any one caught in the act. 好 hao³ does not mean here good but “how much”! how great! — We have already hinted at the double meaning of the word hare in China. Here the word is not used without a reason; 倒憋氣 tao¹ pie¹ ch¹i¹, means to draw in the breath as if preparing for an effort.

TRANSLATION

As soon as I came out of my gate, what an un auspicious sight! — I saw a hare which was drawing in its breath — I was just going to take the gun and shoot — when looking more closely — it was a man who had been taken short!

CVII

咚 咚 咚
坐 轎 兒
一 坐 坐 到 二 廟 兒
二 廟 東
二 廟 西
裏 頭 坐 着 個 肥 公 雞
喂 喂 喂 兒
上 草 垛

NOTES

咚咚咚 tung¹ tung¹ tung¹, imitates the noise of a drum and 根兒 imitates the cock's crowing. 草垛 ts'ao³ tuo¹, a heap of straw, of oats.

TRANSLATION

The drums are striking — (she) is sitting in the chair — and has gone as far the second temple — the east of the temple — and the west of the temple — inside there sits a fat cock — which crows — and flies on a heap of straw.

CVIII

一 進 門 兒 黑 咕 隆 咚
先 當 銅 盆 後 當 燈
一 進 門 兒 本 是 一 窩 耗 子 精
說 一 聲 不 好 牆 要 咕 咚

NOTES

The interior of a miserable house is described. 黑 咕 隆 咚 *hei' ku' lung² tung'* (pronounce with the accent on the last) the first syllable only gives a clear sense—the other cannot be explained but the general sense is that of complete obscurity, chaos. 耗子精 *hao' tzà ching'*, transformation of mice: fantastical mouse-like elves. 不好 *pu' hao²* here alas!

TRANSLATION

Upon entering all was pitch dark — because first the copper basin had been pawned and then the lamp too — going inside (I perceived) I was in a nest of mouse-like elves — and just when I was saying: alas! here the wall is coming down!

CIX

高高山上一座樓
男人梳着女人頭
狀元及第空歡喜
恩愛夫妻不到頭

NOTES

At first it was very difficult for me to get any sense out of these four verses but at last I got from quite an uncultivated person this explanation which could solve all the difficulties. The words above refer to the theatre and to the actors. In China no female actors are allowed and so the second verse could represent a man who combs the hair as a woman, to act on the stage. It seems furthermore to say in the third verse that although the actors on the stage very often play the part of scholars approved at the examinations yet they have no real reason to be glad there at. The fourth verse then means to say that although loving and affectionates pairs are to be seen on the stage yet that is sham as they are of the same sex. 及第 *chi² ti⁴*, technical phrase to mean "to be approved at the examinations". 空 *k'ung¹*, void, vainly. 恩愛 *en¹-ai⁴*, mutual love derived from gratitude and esteem, as that between husband and wife. 不到頭 *pu⁴ tao⁴ t'au²*, "does not come to a point" that is, has no aim, no regular fruit, as expected after marriage.

TRANSLATION

On a very high mountain there is a high tower (stage) — a man is combing there as a woman — the first candidate approved at the examinations rejoices in vain — and loving husband and wife will never come to a point.

CX

小元兒 小元兒
 偌們倆人頑兒
 踢球打嘎兒
 上二閘兒
 吃了一個飯兒
 喝了一個茶兒
 回到家去
 偌們倆人頑兒

NOTES

小元兒 *hsiao³ yüan²'r*, "the small First" surname for a boy. 踢球 *t'i' ch'iu²* to kick balls" sort of game in which the ability consists in pushing with the feet a stone ball and trying to touch the adversary's. 打嘎兒 *ta³ ka²'r*, another game which consists in throwing very far a wooden ball by means of a wooden racket called 棒兒 *pang⁴'r*. 二閘兒 *eur⁴ cha²'r*, the second canal lock near the Tung-pien-men. On the banks there is a very elegant resort for young men. Eating-houses provide

meals, female singers, boats and all that is necessary to make a Chinese happy.

TRANSLATION

Small Yuar², small Yüar² — now, let us play — let us kick the balls or play at rackets — and go to the second Canal lock — when we shall have taken a meal — and when we shall have drunk tea — we will go back home — now, let us play !

CXI

裳衣落
洗白兒
兒得婦
門褰媳
花燒個倒
爺堂後白個財酒牌麻火錢兒哥過子
亮堂開得了存喝鬪餅麪大壁三會靴
月亮開洗娶不愛愛燒黑倆隔姜也綠

綠 帽 子
綠 袍 子
綠 套 子

NOTES

月亮爺 yüe' liang' ye', "the father moon" name given to the moon by children. 亮堂堂 liang' t'ang' t'ang', very bright. Observe here the change of tone in the word 堂 to be read regularly t'ang'. 存財 ts'un' ts'ai', to be economical, to put aside money. 麻花兒 ma' hua'r, a sort of bun. — 落 i' luo', a pile. These words are supposed to be uttered by a wife who in the night, goes out in the court to wash her linen and working, thinks of her sorrows. 姜三哥 Chiang' san' ko', the word Chiang is a family name. San' ko', means that the man in question is the third in his family. 過 kuo' is here for 過日子 kuo' jih' tzu, to pass one's life, to live and spend one's days peacefully, that is to say economically and frugally. 綠帽子 lü' mao' tzu, "a green hat; the green colour is in China reserved for deceived husbands, and the phrase "to wear a green hat" means to have a partner in the marriage.

TRANSLATION

The father moon — is so bright! — I open the back door to wash my linen — I wash it white and I starch it white — but (my husband) after having

married me — is thrifty with his money — he likes to drink wine — he likes to play cards — (and likes too) a great pile of cakes and buns — and brown flower biscuits — which cost two big cash each — but here living by us — there is a neighbour, Chiang the third — who knows how to live well — because he has got green boots — and a green hat — and a green garment — and a green jacket.

CXII

喂	兒	喂	兒	
上	草	塚	活	
一	年	養	了	
七	八	個	賣	了
好	的	都	了	頭
剩	了	禿	缸	
讓	他	刷	褲	襠
缸	裏	洗	鍋	
讓	他	刷	裏	脚
鍋	裏	洗	碟	兒
讓	他	擦	面	兒
碟	裏	洗	地	
讓	他	掃	邊	兒
崩	到	南	穀	看
看	着	穀	地	黃
再	上	家	裏	去

NOTES

From the beginning of the song I could think that the matter is about a cock, but that is only in a jocose way because afterwards it comes to speak of a girl. 褲襠 k'u' tang', the bottom of the trowsers. 裹脚 kuo³ chiao³. foot-bands used by women with small feet.

TRANSLATION

The cock crowing — has jumped on the heap of grass — every year he bears seven or eight times — the good ones he has all sold — only a bald-headed (small) girl is left — if he lets her wash the vats — she washes there the bottom of the trowsers — if he lets her wash the ricepot — she washes there her footbands — if he lets her wash the saucers — she washes her face in the saucers — if he lets her sweep the ground — she runs away towards the South to look at the grain fields — when she has seen that the grain is yellow — she comes back home.

CXIII

茉莉花兒丈夫
茉莉花兒的郎
串枝蓮兒的枕頭綉海棠
虞美人兒姑娘走進了房

眼淚汪汪想親娘
 臉擦官粉玫瑰露兒香
 嘴點梅花胭脂玫瑰瓣兒香
 走一步亮堂堂
 新買了個小猪兒不吃糠
 鼓靠鼓
 鑼靠鑼
 新娶媳婦兒靠公婆

NOTES

玫瑰露 *mei' kuei' lu'*, rose water ; in other cases it means also a sort of white wine. This song seems to be composed of scraps of other songs.

TRANSLATION

The jasmine-husband — the jasmine-bridegroom (is there) — on the wild lotus pillow is embroidered the flower of the *Pyrus spectabilis* — the Rhoëas young-lady enters the room — and weeps bitterly thinking of her own mother — she rubs on her face good cosmetic powder scented with rose water — and she rubs rouge scented like rose petals on her lips — by means of a round cloth shaped like a plum-flower.

過 去 就 是 火 藥 局
 火 藥 局 賣 鋼 針 兒
 過 去 就 是 老 城 根 兒
 老 城 根 兒 兩 頭 兒 多
 過 去 就 是 王 八 窩
 晴 天 曬 蓋 子
 陰 天 躡 湯 鍋

NOTES

This song contains a description of the streets in Peking. 平則門 *p'ing² tso² men²*, the central gate in the west-wall of the Manchu city. 拉大弓 *la¹ ta⁴ kung¹*, to practice archery using a large bow; lit. to draw the long bow. 朝天宮 *chao² t'ien¹ kung¹*, name of a temple. 白塔寺 *pai² t'a² ssu¹*, the temple of the white pagoda. 掛紅袍 *kua⁴ hung² p'ao²*, to put a red coat on the image of Buddha, as people do who have received a favour. 馬市橋 The horse mart bridge. A bridge on the canal. 搖葫蘆 *iao² hu² lu²*, to shake a gourd, as babies are allowed to do, in order to keep them quiet. 四牌樓 *ssu⁴ p'ai² lou²*, a square formed by the junction of four streets at right angles. At each side there is a wooden monumental arch. Two of these squares exist in Peking, one in the east of the Tartar city called 東四牌樓 *tung¹ ssu¹ p'ai² lou²* and another in the west of the city called 西四牌樓 *hsi¹ ssu⁴ p'ai² lou²*, which is alluded to here. 估衣 *ku¹ i¹*, old

clothes, the word *ku*¹ is here pronounced *ku*⁴. 打火 *ta*³ *huo*³, to strike the fire-stone to get fire. Matches are not yet in general use. 毛家灣 *mao*² *chia*² *uan*¹ 'r Mao family's corner-name of place. 扎根刺 *cha*¹ *ken*¹ *tz'u*⁴, to be pricked by a thorn, a needle. This phrase is merely introduced for the sake of rhyming with the next verse. 護國寺 *hu*⁴ *kuo*² *ssu*⁴, temple for the protection of the State. 斗 *tou*³, a willow peck, a chinese measure. 新街口 *hsin*² *chie*¹ *k'ou*³, Mouth of the new street, name of a street. 大糖 *ta*⁴ *t'ang*², sticks of sugar sold to children. 蔣家房 *chiang*³ *chia*¹ *fang*², "the house of the Chiang family" name of street. 安烟袋 *an*¹ *yen*¹ *tai*⁴, to fit the mouth piece of pipe. In the afore-said street there is a pipe-shop. 王奶奶 "the old lady Wang" there is a temple dedicated to her. She was a very good and religious woman who lived during the present dynasty and who after her death was thought to have become a saint spirit, so that temples were erected to her. 啃 *k'en*³, to gnaw; this is naturally purely imaginary as the good lady had lost all her teeth a very long time before. 火藥局 *huo*³ *yao*⁴ *chū*², the powder factory. 兩頭兒多 *liang*² *t'ou*² 'r *tuo*, each part has the same length. 多 is here for 長 *ch'ang*². 王八窩 *uang*² *pa*¹ *uo*¹, a nest of turtles; this imaginary lair is thought to give a saucy and witty end to the song. 躡湯鍋 *ts'uan*¹ *t'ang*¹ *kuo*¹, they jump in the broth kettle. These words are purely absurd.

TRANSLATION

Near the Ping-tso-men they draw long-bows — next there is the temple Ch'ao-t'ien-kung — “Ch'ao-t'ien-kung” is written on the temple in big characters — next there is the temple of the white Pagoda. — In the white pagoda people come to give Buddha a red jacket — next there is the Horse mart bridge. — Near the Horse mart bridge, take three jumps — and there is the temple of T'i-wang. — near this temple, shake the gourd — next there are the four archs. — At the east of the four archs — and at the west of the four archs — and under the four archs old clothes are sold — you ask how much for these old clothes? — you strike a light smoke a pipe — you go on and get to the “Corner of the Mao family”. — Near the corner of the Mao family one is pricked by a thorn — after that comes a “temple for the protection of the State” — near the “temple for the protection of the State” they sell large willow-pecks — after that there comes “the mouth of the new street — near the “mouth of the new street, they sell sugar sticks — after that is “the house of the Chiang family — in “the house of the Chiang family” they fit together smoking pipes — after that there is the temple of old lady Wang. — Old lady Wang gnaws the peel of a melon — next comes the powder factory — near the powder factory they sell steel needles — after that there

is the wall — the wall is of the same lenght
on both sides — after that comes a nest of
turtles — in fine weather they warm that shells in
the sunshine — and in bad weather they spring in
the hoth-pot.

CXV

紫茄裏白紅馬中枝子兒爺的
不海月來來光當豆冠月亮夜
紫大八自自月供毛鷄圓月今

NOTES

The first two verses are the common t'ou²-tzu which has nothing to do with what follows. 海茄 hai³ ch'ie², the egg plant fruit. The Chinese pretend to see in the moon a hare, to which they give offerings on the fifteenth of the 8th moon.

This hare is called 兔兒爺 t'u' r ye². 自來白 tzu' lai² pai², "naturally white" a sort of white cake. 自來紅 tzu' lai² hung², "naturally red" — a cake with sugar on it. 馬兒 ma³'r, a picture on which is drawn the moon. Inside the moon the hare is sun piling drugs in a mortar. This picture is burned after the offering. 當中 tang¹ chung¹, in the middle. 毛豆枝兒 soy beans are offered to the rabbit, as this animal is very fond of this food. 亂烘烘 luan¹ hung¹ hung¹, disorderly irregularly, said of the beans on the branches. 鷄冠子 chi¹ kuan¹ tzu, the cocks comb flower. 紅裏個紅 hung² li³ ko¹ hung², "red in the red" very red. 圓月兒 yüan² yüe' r, like the round moon. The water melon which is called on this occasion 團圓西瓜 t'uan² yüan² hsi¹ kua¹ (the meeting melon) is cut in as many slices as there are persons in the family.

TRANSLATION

Purple or not purple — the big fruit of the egg-plant? — In the eighth moon Lord Rabbit is worshipped — white cakes — brown cakes — the picture of the moon — is worshipped and played in the middle — the soy beans are in disorder — the cockscomb flowers are of the deepest-red — the peel of the melon offered to the moon is dark — the Lord moon eats and laughs heartily — to-night the moonlight is brighter than usual.

CXVI

說開船就開船
 開了船下江南
 江南有一個大王廟
 大王廟一邊兒一個和尚
 一邊兒一個旗杆
 今年有一對子戲
 過年跑馬上刀山
 刀山上有根線兒
 兩根紅兩根藍
 男的搬的朝天鐙
 女的搬的朝天鐙

NOTES.

跑馬 or 跑馬獅的 p'ao³ ma³ hsie' tī, circus riders. 上刀山 shang' tao' shan', lit. "to climb on the sword mountain" is the name for an exercise seen very often in our circuses; that of jumping from one side of a row of standing swords to the other. 朝天鐙 ch'ao² t'ien', teng', "the staff looking towards the sky" other feat of dexterity which consists in raising one's leg up perpendicularly turning the foot-sole to the sky. 鐙朝天 teng' ch'ao² t'ien', the same phrase as before in a different form.

TRANSLATION

We say "set sail" and the ship starts — the

ship is in motion and we go downwards to Kiang-nan — in Kiang-nan there is a big temple to the great king of heaven — at each side of the Tai-wang-miao there is a priest — and at each side a flagstaff. — this year there are a couple of theatrical performances — and next year there will be circusriders and “ jumping on the swords ” — on the row of swords there are four threads — two of them are red and two are blue — the men perform the feat of “ the stirrup looking to the sky — and the women perform the feat of the “ stirrup which looks to the sky.

CXVII

拉	拉	穀	的	車	三	哥	哥
女	孩	兒	上	車	娘	也	哭
叫	聲	娘	娘	你	別	哭	
等	着	我	三	娘	坐	齊	了 哭
芝	麻	稽	兒	樹			
掛	鈴	鐺					
想	我	三	娘	一	陣	風	
想	我	三	娘	打	門	鐘	
蒺	藜	開	花	蒺	藜	找	
誰	想	親	娘	誰	知	道	

NOTES

拉 拉 穀 la¹ la¹ ku³, sort of a locust. The begin-

ning of the song is hard to translate. In the second verse there begins to be light. 三娘 *san¹ niang³*, perhaps it is meant her uncle's wife, the uncle being the third in his family. 坐齊了 *tsuo¹ ch'i³ la*, to sit together, in full number. 芝麻稽兒樹 *chih¹ ma³ chie¹'r shu¹*, the sesamum plant. This verse and the following form a sort of 頭子 in the very middle of the song, and it is hard to guess why a bell is spoken of as being attached to that plant. 一陣風 *i¹ chen¹ feng¹*, my thought goes as quick as a gust of wind. 打門鐘 *ta³ men³ chung¹*, it seems to me as if I were striking the door-bell. 蒺藜花兒 *chi³ li³ hua¹'r*, caltrop flowers.

TRANSLATION

The locust cart and the third brother (?)—when I, the girl sit down in the cart, my mother also weeps — I say once : mother, mother do not weep — wait till the third aunt sits also and then weep — on the sesamum-tree there hangs a bell — thinking of my aunt my thought travels as quick as a gust of wind — thinking of my aunt methinks I am striking the door-bell at home. — where the caltrops open their flowers there you may look for them — only those can understand me who long so for their mother.

CXVIII

小	三	兒	小	三	兒				
甚	麼	打	拌	兒					
青	洋	縐	的	褲	子				
白	汗	襖	兒						
白	汗	襖	兒	鎖	着	狗	牙	兒	
騎	馬	穗	兒						
擗	鍋	圈	兒						
青	辮	穗	兒						
緊	辮	花	兒						
左	邊	掖	着	晚	香	玉			
右	邊	掖	着	藹	康	尖	兒		
魚	白	襪	子	一	道	臉	兒		
雙	臉	兒	鞋	一	道	線	兒		

NOTES

The toilet of a young lady is here described. 鎖 suo³, to hem clothes, to work a sort of embroidery at the edges of a dress. 狗牙兒 kou³ ya²'r, pattern of embroidery in form of small triangles resembling dog's teeth. 騎馬穗兒 chi² ma³ suei⁴'r, a row of cut hair left standing just before the plaited hair. 擗鍋圈兒 ning² kuo¹ ch'üan¹'r, small braids plaited on children's heads. 辮穗兒 pien⁴ suei⁴'r, the silk tassel at the end of a pigtail. 辮花兒 pien⁴ hua¹'r, the knots of a braid. 晚香玉 uan³ hsiang¹ yü⁴, the tuberose. 藹康尖兒 a shoot of *Ocimum*

basilicum (sweet basil). 魚白 *yü² pai²*, as white as a fish skin; white with a greenish shade of colour. 一道臉兒 *i¹ tao¹ lien²* r, “with one surface” this means that no seam is to be seen on the socks. 一道線兒 *i¹ tao¹ hsien²* r, the two leather strings which come on the shoe are as thin as a thread.

TRANSLATION

Small San`r, small San`r — what dress are you wearing? — I have got dark crape trowsers — and a white shirt — on the white shirt are embroidered “dog’s teeth” — on the head I have a row of standing hair — and some small braids — a dark tassel for my pigtail — and the pigtail is plaited very tight — on the left of my hair I have stuck a tuberoses — and on the right a head of sweet basil — I have too white socks with no seam — and my shoes have leather strings as thin as a thread.

CXIX

隔 着 牆 兒 扔 切 糕
棗 兒 豆 兒 都 掉 了
隔 着 牆 兒 扔 磚 頭
砸 了 妞 兒 的 兩 把 兒 頭
隔 着 牆 兒 扔 票 子
怎 麼 知 道 姑 娘 沒 落 子

NOTES

I do not think that this song can be properly understood by children, but the fact is that numbers of them sing these verses the meaning of which is rather equivocal. It alludes to a man who tries to win a young girl in different comical ways. 切糕 *ch'ie' kao'*, slices of pudding made with flower, dates and long beans. 兩把兒頭 *liang² pa' r t'ou²*, "a head with two handles" chinese name for the manchu women's head-gear. This leads one to suppose that this rhyme originated from bannermen. 沒落子 *mei² lao' tzu*, means literally has not a halting-place, a refuge-and then, to be in a miserable condition, to be poor, not to know where to go.

TRANSLATION

From outside the wall he throws slices of pudding — the dates and the long beans all fell to the ground. — From outside the wall he throws lumps of bricks — and has broken the girl's manchu head-gear — from outside the wall he throws bank-notes — how does he know that the girl has no means ?

CXX

廟裏的和尙拉大鎖
挨家兒搖鈴鐺

廟	裏	的	和	尚	化	月	米						
挨	家	兒	嘆	十	聲	了	旗	杆	賣	了	廟		
廟	裏	的	和	尚	典	全	不	攤	兒				
摩	勒	魚	兒	道	袍	小							
廟	裏	的	和	尚	擺	生							
大	把	抓	的	落	花	不	着	覺					
廟	裏	的	和	尚	睡	姑	娘	頂					
想	着	隔	壁	兒	大	拿	大	念	經				
廟	裏	的	和	尚	麼	香	不	打	磬				
踉	了	的	子	怎	燒	茶	不						
廟	裏	的	和	尚	打	留	不						
叮	兒	的	兒	的	尚	頭	髮						
廟	裏	字	兒	的	不	修	行						
一	個												

NOTES

This song is one of the less devotional towards the buddhist priests and is widely sung in Peking by children and grown people. 大鎖 *ta' suo³*, a large chain which the priests fasten to their neck and drag around when travelling about to collect alms. Sometimes, in order to excite pity and devotion, this chain is made so heavy that the help of a second man is required to drag it along. 挨家兒 *ai³ chia¹' r*, from one house to the other in succession. 化月米 *hua¹ yüe¹ mi³*, to collect the monthly rice. Many families are in the habit of giving every month a quantity of rice to certain

temples. The first and fifteenth of the month a priest goes around with a coolie who bears a barril to collect the offerings. 摩勒魚兒 *muo² lo¹ yü² r*, a wooden drum in the shape of a fish-head; this instrument is beaten during the ceremonies, and is also taken round by almsbegging priests who carry it on their back tied by a cord. 道袍 *tao⁴ p'ao²*, the priests ceremonial dress. 落花生 *luo⁴ hua¹ sheng¹*, ground nuts. 拿大頂 *na² ta⁴ ting³*, to stand on one's head, as jugglers do. 磬 *ch'ing⁴*, a copper instrument struck during a religious service. 一個字兒 *i¹ ko⁴ tzu⁴ r*, "in one word" altogether, with no exception. 修行 *hsiu¹ hsing²*, to perfect and reform one's character, as chinese priests are supposed to do in their temples.

TRANSLATION

The priest of the temple drags a heavy chain — and goes from one house to the other ringing a bell — the priest of the temple goes out for the monthly rice — and from house to house he sighs ten times, — the priest in the temple has mortgaged the flag-staffs and has sold the temple — and he does not want either the fish-drum or the ceremonial dress — the priest in the temple has prepared a small fruit stall — (and says) "ground nuts, a big handful of them! — The priest in the temple cannot sleep — because he is thinking of the neighbour's elder daughter — the priest in the temple stands on his head — but

having sprained his neck how could he read the sacred books? — The priest in the temple does not strike the copperdrum — but ding dong! he strikes instead the tea-cup — the priest in the temple lets his hair grow — and does not care a bit about the improvement of his moral conduct.

CXXI

膠泥 瓣兒
使勁兒 摔
刻了 爺爺兒
刻奶 奶兒
爺爺兒 戴着一頂 困秋帽
奶奶兒 戴着一枝 鳳頭釵

NOTES

This song is sung by children who play at making mud-pies. 膠泥 *chiao¹ ni²*, the clay mixed up with water becomes sticky like glue. 泥瓣兒 *ni² pan⁴ r*, a block of clay. 使勁摔 *shih³ ching⁴ r shuai¹*, cast it with force on the ground. Before the clay is fit to be put into the moulds, it must be rendered softer and that result is obtained by beating the clay repeatedly on the ground. 刻, read here *k'o¹* and not *k'o⁴*, to mould. The moulds sold to the boys in the streets are of different forms and some of them have the form of a man or

of a woman. 困秋帽 *k'un' c'iu' mao'*, an old round hat. 鳳頭釵 *feng' t'ou' ch'ai'*, a hair-pin for women; it means literally a phoenix-head pin.

TRANSLATION

The sticky clay blocks — first we throw them on the ground, and then we mould out a gentleman — we mould out a lady — the gentleman wears on old round hat — and the lady a phoenix-head hairpin.

CXXII

祭竈 祭竈 新年 來到
老頭子 過來 要毡帽
老婆子 過來 要裹脚
小淘氣 兒 過來 要花炮

NOTES

These words are pronounced while sacrificing to the god of the stoves near the end of the year. 裹脚 *kuo' chiao'*, ankle bands for ladies trowsers. At the New-year and the days which precede it, every body tries to dress well and to look his best. 小淘氣兒 *hsiao' t'ao' ch'i'r*, general nickname given to children meaning the small impertinent. 花炮 *hua' p'ao'*, crackers.

TRANSLATION

Sacrifice to the god of the stoves, Sacrifice to the god of the stoves, the new-year has arrived — the old man comes over and wants a felt-hat — the old lady comes over and wants anklebands — the impertinent youngster comes over and wants crackers.

CXXIII

滴 滴 滴
上 草 塚
他 媽 養 活 獨 一 個
金 盆 洗
銀 盆 臥
一 聘 聘 到 山 東 克
十 個 公
十 個 婆
十 個 小 叔 子 管 着 我
叫 他 井 台 兒 去 打 水
勒 的 小 手 兒 怪 疼 得
樹 上 鳥
吱 兒 扎 的 叫
受 苦 受 難 誰 知 道

NOTES

滴滴滴 *tī' tī' tī'*, imitates the noise made by

a chicken. 克 k'o', an unusual pronunciation of the word 去 ch'ü', to go. It is specially used by bannermen and old fashioned people. 小叔子 hsiao³ shu² tzü, husband's younger brothers. 井台兒 ching³ t'ai' r, the well step. 勒手 lei¹ shou³ "to have one's hands strangled" that is to say to hurt one's hands by pulling with a rope. 吱兒扎 chih¹ r cha¹, is supposed to imitate the birds chattering. 難 nan', in the fourth tone, means adversity, trouble.

TRANSLATION

The chicken screaming — flies on the grass-stack. — Her mother had reared only her — she washed in a gold basin — she slept in a silver basin — and then they married her in the Shan-tung — (it looks as if she had) ten fathers-in-law — and ten mothers-in-law — and ten brothers-in-law to watch her — now they let her go to the well to draw water — and her small hands are swollen with the great pain — the birds on the trees — chatter merrily — who knows that I am suffering bitterness and pain ?.

CXXIV

月 亮 爺
亮 堂 堂
街 坊 的 姑 娘 要 嫁 粧

錠兒粉
棒兒香
棉花胭脂二百張

NOTES

錠兒粉 *ting' r fen³*, an inferior quality of cosmetic powder in square pieces. 棒兒香 *pang' r hsiang¹*, an incense stick. 棉花胭脂 *mien² hua¹ yen¹ chih¹*, small cotton strip of cloth imbued with cosmetic rouge, to paint women's lips.

TRANSLATION

The father-moon — is bright and shining —
the neighbour's girl wants her bridal presents —
squares of cosmetic powder — incense sticks —
and two hundred rouge cotton-strips.

CXXV

松枝兒樹
掛鈴鐺
親娘賣我在小船兒上
梭子米飯
小魚兒湯
端起飯碗兒想親娘
攔下飯碗兒上後艙
哭了一聲哥哥妹妹誰還想誰

親娘想我一陣風
我想親娘在夢中

NOTES

The first two verses form the common introduction. The word 松枝兒樹 *sung' chih' r shu'*, means literally a fir-branched tree, that is the same as 松樹 *sung' shu'*, a fir-tree. 糗子米 *suo'-tzü mi³*, a coarse quality of rice; the character is not to be found in any dictionary, but is currently written as above. The words are supposed to be uttered by a small boy who has been sold by his mother to be a small servant on a boat. — 一陣風 *i' chen' feng'*, here, as quick as a gale of wind.

TRANSLATION

On the fir-tree — there is a small bell — my own mother has sold me on board a boat — (I eat here) coarse rice — and fish broth — taking the rice-bowl to my mouth I think of my mother — when I lay down the rice-bowl then I go to the stern rooms — and I shed some tears saying: brothers, sisters, which of us thinks of each other? — the care of my mother for me has been as fleeting as a squall of wind — but I think of my mother in my dreams.

CXXVI

黃	豆	粒	兒						
圓	上	圓							
養	活	了	頭	不	值	錢			
三	塊	豆	腐	二	兩	酒			
送	在	婆	婆	大	門	口			
婆	婆	說	脚	也	大	臉	又	醜	
公	公	說	留	着	罷	留	着	罷	
燒	茶	煮	飯	也	用	他			

NOTES

黃豆 *huang² tou⁴*, a small sort of yellow haricot (*Phaseolus flavus*). 圓上圓 *yüan² shang⁴ yüan²*, "round on round" that means very much round. The song is taken from the country and that may be observed in some phrases different from the pure Pekinese. For instance the last verse says: 燒茶煮飯 *shao¹ ch'a² chu³ fan⁴*, instead of 沏茶煮飯 *ch'i¹ ch'a² chu³ fan⁴*, to prepare tea and food.

TRANSLATION

The yellow haricot — is completely round — bearing a daughter, she is worth no money — just as much as two bits of bean-curd and two ounces of wine. — when we send her to her mother-in-law's house — the mother-in-law says: her feet are large and her face is ugly — the father-in-law

says : let her stay, let her stay ! — she can be useful for boiling tea and cooking food.

CXXVII

松 栢 枝 兒
碾 子 輥
我 跟 姐 姐 同 出 嫁
姐 姐 嫁 在 南 山 裏
妹 妹 嫁 在 北 窪 裏

NOTES

栢 樹 *pai³ shu⁴*, the cypress. The branches of fir and cypress are burned in some offerings to the spirits, but here the second verse has no rational meaning.

TRANSLATION

The branches of fir and cypress — are crushed by a stone roller (?) — I and my elder sister both marry — my elder sister will marry in the mountains of the South — and I will marry in the Northern bogs.

CXXVIII

一 個 毬 兒

拍 兩 瓣 兒
打 花 鼓 兒
繞 花 線 兒
裏 拐 外 拐
八 仙 過 海
九 十 九 個 一 百

NOTES

The shuttle-cok is kicked by boys but the girls push the ball with their hands and this is called 拍 *p'ai¹*. Sometimes while playing they sing some rhymes, one of which I present to the reader. 拍 兩 瓣 兒 *p'ai¹ liang³ pan'¹ r*, is struck so hard as to be broken in two pieces. 打 花 鼓 兒 *ta³ hua¹ ku³*, sort of musical amusement consisting of a song accompanied by drum beating performed generally by girls. This drum beating is accompanied by various evolutions of the arms, non unlike the movement of pushing the shuttle-cok. — 繞 花 線 兒 *jao⁴ hua¹ hsien¹, r*, another game. The player places the shuttle-cok on his foot, kicks it in the air, awaits its falling down, and just before it touches the ground, he turns the foot down round it and kicks it up again. 裏 拐 外 拐 *liu³ kai³ uai¹ kuai³*, pushing inside and pushing outside the shuttle-cok.

TRANSLATION

A shuttle-cok — is kicked up and broken in

two pieces — beat the drum — pick up the shuttle-cock. — push inside, push outside — the eight genii cross the sea — ninety nine and a hundred.

CXXIX

門 兒 敲 得 梆 梆
 狗 兒 咬 得 汪 汪
 我 說 一 聲 誰
 騎 着 毛 驢 兒
 扛 着 米
 要 粗 的
 要 細 的
 量 糠 兒 的
 簸 淨 兒 的

NOTES

梆 梆 pang¹ pang¹, imitates the knock at the door. 汪 汪 uang⁴ uang⁴, the barking of a dog. 毛驢 兒 mao² lü², r, a common name for an ass, instead of the simple 驢 兒 lü² r. A slang word for it is 毛團 兒 mao² t'uan² r; here the rice-seller is supposed to advertise his wares in the last four verses. 量 糠 兒 的 liang² k'ang¹ 'r ti², rice and husks together, rice which has not been winnowed. 簸 淨 兒 的 puo³ ching⁴ 'r ti, clean rice with no husks.

TRANSLATION

People knock at the door — and the dog barks — I ask once, who is there? — (the rice seller) rides an ass — and bears the rice on his back. — (he says) do you want coarse rice? — do you want fine rice? — here is rice and husk, — and here is winnowed rice.

CXXX

小 陶 氣 兒
跳 鑽 鑽 兒
腦 瓜 兒 上 梳 着 個 小 蠟 千 兒
一 入 學 了 八 宗 藝
撞 鐘 踢 球 外 帶 打 嘎

NOTES

跳 鑽 鑽 兒 *t'iao' tsuan' tsuan' r*, hopping and jumping. 蠟 千 兒 *la' c'ien' r*, a chinese candlestick. When boys have not yet hair enough to comb a pigtail, sometimes their hair is bound up in a small plait which stands perpendicularly on the top of the head. 八 宗 藝 *pa' tsung' i'*, eight kinds of abilities. 撞 鐘 *chuang' chung'*, lit. "to strike the bell". A game practised by boys who each throw a piece of cash against a wall. The greater or lesser distance to which the cash rebounds from

the wall makes one the winner or loser. 外帶 uai⁴ tai⁴, and furthermore.

TRANSLATION

The impertinent youngster — goes hopping and jumping — he has a “candle” toupet on his head — he himself has mastered eight sorts of abilities — he can play at “bell-striking” at foot-ball and also at wood ball.

CXXXI

打羅兒篩
曳羅兒篩
該我的麪錢不拿來
多會兒拿來
逛燈拿來
甚麼燈
小腳兒燈
一登登了個大窟窿

NOTES

逛燈 kuang⁴ teng⁴, a festival from the 13th to the 17th of the first moon. In the evening lanterns are hung out by shops and private houses. 小腳兒燈 hsiao³ chiao³ r teng⁴. A lantern shaped in the form of a chinese small foot. The introduction to this song

is identical with another translated before. 登 is pronounced like “lantern” therefore the pun.

TRANSLATION

Strike the sieve and sift — drag the sieve and sift — you owe me money for flour and do not pay me — when will you bring it here? — At the festival of Lanterns I'll bring it — what lantern? — The small foot lantern. — walking on it I made a big hole in it.

CXXXII

小 大 姐
纔 十 八
滿 臉 的 鋸 子 大 疤 拉
桃 兒 粉
任 意 兒 搽
胭脂 抹 的 血 絲 胡 拉
梳 着 一 個 蘇 州 纂 兒
鬢 角 兒 斜 插 一 枝 花
金 蓮 多 麼 大
橫 量 二 寸 八

NOTES

小 大 姐 hsiao³ ta¹ chie³, the young lady. The picture is humorous. 鋸 子 chü¹ tzu, “a saw” it

refers to the fact that after the small pox the skin of the face sometimes is glued together thus forming a scar and a small pimple on it. 桃兒粉 t'ao' r fen³, red cosmetic powder sold in peach like beads. 血絲胡拉, read almost in one word hsie³ sz-hu-là. I have only adopted these characters in order to write down the sound as spoken; the general meaning is to look as if besmeared with blood — 橫量 heng² liang², measuring the size of the foot. The smallest foot is three inches.

TRANSLATION

The young lady — has just reached her eighteenth year — she has the face full of pimples and scars — with red cosmetic — she rubs all over the face to her heart's desire and then she combs her hair into a Soo-chow chignon — near the temple she sticks a flower in her hair — how big is her foot? — altogether two inches and eight tenths of an inch.

CXXXIII

我的兒
我的姣
三年不見長的這麼高
騎着我的馬
拿着我的刀
扛着我的案板賣切糕

TRANSLATION

My son — my treasure — during the three years that I have not seen you, you have grown so tall — riding my horse — taking my sword — bearing on your shoulder my kneading-board and selling slices of pudding.

CXXXIV

豆 芽 菜
水 澎 澎
誰 家 的 媳 婦 兒 打 公 公
公 公 拿 着 楊 棍 兒 拐
媳 婦 兒 拿 着 袖 口 兒 甩

NOTES

豆 芽 菜 *tou¹ ya² ts'ai¹*, bean sprouts commonly eaten in China. 水 澎 澎 *shuei³ p'eng¹ p'eng¹*, flowing with water; these sprouts are put in water to keep them fresh.

TRANSLATION

The bean sprouts — are dripping with water — who is the wife who dares to beat her father in law? — the father-in-law beats her with his stick — and the woman only lets her sleeve down (with anger).

CXXXV

秦 始 皇
 砌 城 牆
 牆 頭 兒 矮
 磴 兒 窄
 擋 着 達 子 過 不 來
 後 來 有 個 孟 姜 女
 千 里 來 尋 夫
 對 着 牆 一 哭
 哭 了 一 聲 天 兒
 哭 塌 了 半 邊 兒

NOTES

秦 始 皇 *ch'in² shih³ huang²*, the emperor who built the great wall and who is said to have had buried in it all the men who died during its building. 城 牆 *ch'eng² ch'iang²* "the fortified wall" the full name is 萬里長城 *uan³ li³ ch'ang² ch'eng²*. 磴兒窄 *teng¹'r chai³*, the layers of brick are so thin that a man is able to creep on the wall as up stairs. 孟姜女 *Meng¹ chiang³ nū³*. A beautiful woman whose husband, although a *hsiou⁴ ts'ai²*, was forced to work at the wall; being in delicate health he died and was buried in the brickwork. When his wife came for him and heard of his end, she knelt by the wall and wept invoking Heaven. She so moved Heaven that the wall crumbled away at the spot and showed her husband's remains: she piously exhumed them, and

took them with her. She was afterwards rewarded by the Emperor who granted her a precious belt. But she was so oppressed with grief that at last she ran her head against a wall and died.

TRANSLATION

The Emperor Shih-huang — built the Great Wall — the top of the wall was low — and the steps were short — to prevent the Tartars from crossing — There was Meng Chiang nü — who came from a thousand miles away to find her husband — then wept in front of the wall — wept and cried : O Heaven ! — and at her tears the side of the wall fell down.

CXXXVI

蹊	蹊	蹊	換	個	牛
換	把	刀	牛	沒	甲
刀	不	快	換	匹	馬
切	青	菜	馬	沒	鞍
葉	兒	青	上	南	山
換	把	弓	南	山	一窩兔兒
弓	沒	頭	剝	了	皮兒穿條褲兒

NOTES

This rhyme has no sense all through. 蹊 蹊 hsi' ch'iao', extraordinary, uncommon ; at least it is

the only meaning and writing which may reasonably agree with the pronunciation hsi' ch'iao'.

TRANSLATION

Very extraordinary — change a sword — the sword does not cut — hash vegetables — their leaves are green — change a bow — the bow has no head — change an ox — the ox has no scales — change a horse — the horse has no saddle — go to the South hills — in the southern hills there is a nest of hares — from which we take the skin to make a pair of trowsers.

CXXXVII

白塔寺
有白塔
塔上有磚沒有瓦
塔臺兒上裂了一道縫
魯班爺下來鋸上塔

NOTES

Near the P'ing-tso-men there is a pagoda already spoken of in rhyme N°114. During this dynasty it threatened to collapse and showed a great crack. The popular tradition says that just at that time somebody dressed like a mason walked round and round the place shouting the words. 鋸大傢伙兒 chü' ta' chia' huo' r "mend the big

thing". A few days after, with great astonishment the candid Pekinese observed that the crack in the pagoda had been repaired and on the fresh work was visible the mark of a mason's trowel. The popular fancy nowhere so wildly developed as in China, directly connected this mysterious piece of masonry with the workman's words and recognized in him Lu³ pan¹ ye², the Genius protector of masons and carpenters. As to the historical truth of the work so well executed, it may be explained in two ways: either the work had been done by government order and at an uncommon time of the day: or more probably that crack had never existed.

TRANSLATION

At the temple of Pai-t'a-ssu, there is a white pagoda — on the pagoda there are bricks but not tiles — on the pagoda's pedestal a gaping crack appeared — and Lu-pan-ye himself came down to repair it.

CXXXVIII

麻 子 鬼
偷 凉 水
搬 倒 了 缸
砸 了 腿
你 赔 我 的 缸
我 赔 你 的 腿

NOTES

痲子鬼 *ma³ tzu kuei¹*, is said jocularly about a child much marked by smallpox.

TRANSLATION

The ‘small pox devil’ — stealing the water — has upset the bucket — and has broken his leg — you repay me for my bucket — and I will repay you for your leg.

CXXXIX

喜 花 招 來 戴 滿 頭
喜 酒 兒 斟 上 嘔 幾 嘔
喜 鳥 兒 落 在 房 簷 兒 上
哨 的 是 喜 報 三 元 獨 占 鰲 頭

NOTES

The *hsi³* or joy here alluded, to is the approval at the examinations. 嘔 *ou¹*, means to drink, to gulp down. 三元 *san¹ yüan²*: a candidate who has taken the highest places at the examinations. These words are pronounced by the joy-messengers 報喜的 *pao⁴ hsi³ ti*, when they reach the door of the successful candidate. 獨占鰲頭 *tu² chan⁴ ao¹ t'ou²*, (the man who has been successful at the last Hanlin examinations is said) to have alone occupied the Ao-fish's head.

TRANSLATION

Here are the flowers of joy, pick them up and cover your head with them — here is the wine of joy, pour it out and drink — the birds of joy come to stop under the eaves of the roof — and the news they bear is : the first successful candidate at the examinations.

CXXXX

錐 幫 子 兒
納 底 子 兒
掙 了 二 升 小 米 子 兒
蒸 蒸 烙 烙
吃 他 娘 的 一 頓 犒 勞

NOTES

This rhyme speaks jocularly of a little fellow who is supposed to work in order to give himself a treat. 小米 *hsiao³ mi³*, millet — 蒸 *cheng¹*, to steam. 烙 *lao⁴*, to fry in a pan. 犒勞 *k'ao⁴ lao³*, a treat given on some lucky days, to soldiers or workmen.

TRANSLATION

(The boy) bores the heelband of the shoe — and stitches the shoe sole — he has earned two pecks of millet — after a good deal of steaming and

frying — he eats a good meal given to him by his mother as a reward.

CXXXXXI

月 亮 爺
明 煌 煌
騎 着 大 馬 去 燒 香
大 馬 拴 在 梧 桐 樹
小 馬 拴 在 廟 門 兒 上

NOTES

明 煌 煌 *ming² huang² huang²*, extremely bright.
梧 桐 *u² t'ung²*, the *Sterculia platanifolia* (Catalpa).

TRANSLATION

The Lord moon — how bright he is — on horse-back I go to burn incense — the big horse is bound to the Catalpa tree — and the small horse to the temple door.

CXXXXXII

高 高 山 上 一 窩 猪
兩 口 子 打 架 孩 子 哭
孩 子 孩 子 你 別 哭
等 着 我 打 那 個 老 丈 夫

NOTES

The first verse is a good sample of those extraordinary introductions.

TRANSLATION

On a very high mountain there is a lair of pigs
— a husband and a wife quarrel and the child weeps
— child, child, do not weep — wait till I thrash
this old husband.

CXXXXXIII

廟門兒對廟門兒
裏頭住着個小妞兒
白臉蛋兒
紅嘴唇兒
扭扭捏捏愛死個人兒

NOTES

扭扭捏捏 *niu³ niu³ nie⁴ nie⁴*, to walk in a sweet and graceful manner.

TRANSLATION

A door of the temple is opposite to a door of the temple — there lives a small girl — with white cheeks — and red lips — she walks so nicely that she makes people die of love.

CXXXXIV

鳥	鳥	鳥	要	打	架
身	量	兒	用	手	抄
要	吃	飯	要	洗	臉
先	毛	腰	拿	水	澆

NOTES

鳥, read here niao¹ and not niao³ — the word has no sense and is purely phonetical. 毛腰 mao² yao¹, the person spoken of being so tall, must stoop down to take his food. 抄 ch'ao¹ (written some times when in this sense with another vulgar character) means here to lift up somebody by catching him under the armpits. 澆 chiao, to water, to pour down water.

TRANSLATION

Hallo! — he is really tall — when he wants to eat — he must stoop down — when he wants to fight — he lifts his adversary under the arms — when he wants to wash his face — he pours water down on it (rather than to stop down to the basin).

CXXXXV

這個人生來性兒急
清晨早跑去趕集

錯穿了綠布褲
倒騎着一頭驢

NOTES

綠布褲 *lǜ' pu' k'u'*, trousers made of green cloth, trousers for a woman. The man in his haste had put on his wife's trousers. 倒騎 *tao' ch'i'*, to ride with the head turned to the animal's tail.

TRANSLATION

This man is very hasty by nature — early in the morning he started for the fair — and he had put on by mistake his wife's trousers — and was riding with his head towards the donkey's tail.

CXLVI

窮太太兒
抱着個肩兒
吃完了飯兒
遶了個灣兒
又買檳榔
又買烟兒

TRANSLATION

The poor woman — folds her arms on her

breast — when she has finished taking her food —
she goes out for a stroll — and buys betelnuts —
and tobacco.

CXLVII

是誰拍我的門兒
小狗兒汪汪叫
親家太太來到了
忙着穿花鞋
褲腿兒又掉了

TRANSLATION

Who knocks at the door? — the small dog
barks — a lady relation has arrived — in a hurry
I put on my embroidered shoes — but my
anklebands have fallen down.

CXLVIII

大哥哥，二哥哥，
這年頭兒怎麼過
棒子麪兒二百多
扁豆開花兒一呀兒啲

NOTES

年頭 *nien² t'ou²*, the crops of the year: 怎麼
過 *tse² mo² kuo¹*, how will it be possible to live? 棒
子麪 *pang¹-tzu-mien¹* flour of Indian corn. 二百多
eur¹ pai³ tuo¹, more than two pai for a chin¹, a chinese
pound. The last verse has no sense and ends the
rhyme as the person tries to divert the attention
to another subject.

TRANSLATION

First elder brother — second elder brother —
with these crops how will it be possible to live? —
Indian corn flour is sold at two cents a pound! —
the bean plant opens its flowers, Hallo!

CXLIX

正月裏正月正
七個老西兒去逛燈
反穿皮襖還嫌冷
河裏的王老八他怎麼過冬

NOTES

反穿皮襖 *fan³ ch'uan¹ p'i³ ao³*, wearing the fur
coat with the fur outside, to feel warmer. Here the
words are said to have a laugh at the Shan-hsi
men. 王老八 *uang² lao³ pa¹* is instead of 老王八,
the old turtle.

TRANSLATION

In the first month, in the first month — seven Shan-hsi people go out in the streets to see the lanterns. — they wear their furs outside and yet they feel cold — but look at the turtles in the river, how do they manage to live through the winter?

CL

小小子兒開鋪兒
開開鋪兒兩扇門兒
小棹子兒
小椅子兒
烏木筷子兒小碟子兒

NOTES

烏木 u¹ mu⁴, ebony wood.

TRANSLATION

The small boy has opened a shop — he has opened a shop with two front doors — with small tables — and small chairs — and chop-sticks of ebony wood.

CLI

小姑娘作一夢
夢見婆婆來下定

真 金 條
裹 金 條
扎 花 兒 裙 子 綉 花 兒 襖

NOTES

下定 *hsia' ting'*, the future mother-in-law goes to the bride's parents and presents the bridal gifts. After this ceremony the marriage is considered fixed and the girl cannot on any account be betrothed to another man. 金條 *chin' t'iao'*, short golden rods sold in the gold-shops called 金店 *chin' tien'*. Each rod may weigh generally from one to four chinese ounces (*liang*). 裹金條 *kuo' chin' t'iao'*, sham gold rods given sometimes as gifts.

TRANSLATION

The small girl — has had a dream — she has dreamt of her mother-in-law coming to give her the bridal gift — real gold rods — and sham gold rods — a gown with stitched flowers — and a cloak with embroidered flowers.

CLII

養 活 猪 吃 口 肉
養 活 狗 會 看 家
養 活 貓 會 拏 耗 子
養 活 你 這 丫 頭 作 甚 麼

NOTES

These words are playfully said by parents to their small daughters. — 口肉 *i' k'ou³ jou⁴*, a mouthful of meat, some meat.

TRANSLATION

If we keep a pig — it is in order to enjoy a good piece of meat — if we keep a dog — it is in order to have him watch the house — if we keep a cat — it is to have him eat the mice — but to keep a maid like you — what is the use of it?

CLIII

喜 兒 喜 兒	賠 了 本 兒
賣 涼 粉 兒	娶 了 個 媳 婦 兒
砸 了 罐 子	一 條 腿 兒

NOTES

喜 兒 *hsi³ 'r*, may be shortened from 喜雀 *hsi³ ch'iao³*, a magpie, but here it is used as a common nickname for children, meaning "joy". 涼粉兒 *liang² fen³ 'r*, fresh powder, is white bean-flour which in summer time is kept by merchants in an ice-box to sell it cool. 罐子 *kiuan⁴ tzü³*, a pot taken around by the bean-flour sellers, in which they keep a sort of sauce to season their ware before selling it to customers.

一條腿兒 *i¹ t'iao² t'uei³'r*, (with) one leg. It must however be noticed that this phrase also means in Pekinese language "very harmoniously, very peacefully" when speaking of a loving husband and wife: as the two persons were only one, tied one to the other, having one leg in two and therefore with one will and wish.

TRANSLATION

Joy, Joy — sells cool bean-flour — but he has broken the sauce jar — and has forfeited his capital — now he has married a wife — with one leg (or, and he is very happy with her).

CLIV

鼓靠着鼓來
鑼靠鑼
新娶的媳婦兒靠公婆
月亮爺靠着娑羅兒樹
牛郎織女緊靠天河

NOTES

These first verses refer to the ceremonies of a marriage procession, so often mentioned before. — According to chinese folk-lore it is related that in the moon there is a big tree called

娑羅兒樹 *suo¹ luo² r shu¹* (*Shorea robusta*) on which the father moon leans. The word *solo* is derived from the sanscrit *sâla*. In the first two verses the word *k'ao*, to recline, to lean, is used in the sense of to be contiguous, near, in great number. 牛郎 *niu² lang²* or also 牽牛 *ch'ien¹ niu²*, the constellation of the Herdboy. 織女 *chih¹ nü³*, the Spinning damsel, another constellation. The former and the latter are placed each at one side of the milky way; the Chinese consider them to be husband and wife and say that once a year they succeed in seeing each other by a curious expedient. The magpies form themselves into a bridge over the milky way (天河 *t'ien¹ ho²*) and the pair get on the bridge and meet. Many particulars are related about this annual interview; there is also a fantastical play called 渡銀河 *tu⁴ yin² ho²*, the " Crossing of the silver river " in which the adventures and sorrows of this loving pair are exposed to mortal eyes.

TRANSLATION

(In the marriage procession) drums succeed drums — and gongs succeed gongs — a newly married bride relies on her father and mother-in-law — the father moon reclines on the Shorea tree — and the constellations of the Herdboy and the Spinning damsel each lie on one side of the milky way.

CLV

紅 得 哩	七 根 鬚 兒
指 甲 草 兒	六 個 瓣 兒
藍 得 哩	晚 香 玉 得 哩
翠 雀 兒	藹 康 尖 兒

NOTES

Pekinese boys sing these words to imitate the street-call of the flower sellers. The two sounds which I have written 得 哩 to-li, and occur three times in these verses are altogether phonetic and with no meaning tone or accent; so the first verse is pronounced as if it were written hung toli. 指 甲 草 兒 *chih³ chia³ ts'ao³ r* (pronounce *chih² chia³*) lit. finger grass, is the China balsam (*Impatiens balsamina*) with whose red flowers chinese ladies dye their fingers, as the Arab women with the hennè. The flowers of this plant may have different shades of colour from plain white to deep red, and are also called 鳳 仙 花 *feng⁴ hsien¹ hua¹*. 翠 雀 兒 *ts'uei¹ ch'iao³ r*, the larkspur. 花 鬚 兒 *hua¹ hsü¹ r*, stamens and style of flowers. 矮 康 *ai¹ k'ang¹*, an aromatic plant, basilic (*Ocimum basilicum*).

TRANSLATION

Here is the red ! — China balsam — here is the blue ! — the larkspur — with seven

stamens — and six petals — the tuberose — and the basilic grass.

CLVI

大 娘 二 娘 猜
 三 娘 罵 我 醜 奴 才
 我 也 不 是 偷 來 的
 我 也 不 是 跑 來 的
 花 紅 綠 轎 兒 娶 來 的
 瞧 瞧 奴 家 的 手
 金 珠 瑪 瑙 一 大 斗
 瞧 瞧 奴 家 的 牙
 從 小 兒 愛 喝 個 菓 子 茶

NOTES

It happens very often in a family that all the brothers marry and do not live in separate establishments. All the young wives live together and in order to distinguish them, the elder brother's wife is called ta'-niang², the second brother's eur' niang² and so forth. In this way a system of subordination prevails in the family, and the older wives indulge rather often in teasing the younger ones, The ta'-niang², this powerful chief of this female clan has a greater authority than all and is consequently allowed to brew the most mischief possible in the family. 猜 ts'ai', lit. to

guess, to solve riddles, very probably means here to guess, to doubt, to make investigations, suppositions on the woman who is the plaintiff in the song, the youngest wife who complains of having been insulted. 醜奴才 *ch'ou³ nu² ts'ai²* “ugly slave” a most insulting appellation to a woman who has been legally married, implying that she is not a legal wife but a bought slave. 偷來的 *t'ou¹ lai² ti*, to come stealthily, that is to say come and live with a man without any legal and customary sanction. The same meaning is very curiously expressed in the phrase 手拉手兒來的 *shou³ la¹ shou³ lai² ti* — lit. “to come taking each other by the hand” that is said of two persons who like each other and without parental permission and the ordinary ceremony take each other by the hand and go and live together. — After that in English would be found “but”; this most interesting particle is wanting here. 花紅轎 *hua¹ hung² chiao⁴*, “the chair as red as (red) flowers, in which the bride sits, when she is taken from her own paternal house to her husband's. 綠轎 *lü⁴ chiao⁴*, one or two green chairs in which sit some of the girl's relations to take her to the new home. 奴家 *nu² chia⁴*, a term of modesty used by wives for “I” — 瑪瑙 *ma³ nao³*, cornelian. 菓子茶 *kuo³ tzu ch'a²*, “tea with sugared fruits, as taken by rich people.

TRANSLATION

The first wife and the second wife play at guissing riddles — the third wife insults me as “an ugly slave” — but I did not come here stealthily — nor did I run away to come here — I was married and taken here in a red chair and was followed by green chairs — look here at my hands! — I could fill a big peck with the gold pearls and cornelion that I wear — look here at my teeth! — since I was a child I have been accustomed to take “tea with candied fruits”.

CLVII

小 胖 小 子 兒 真 有 喂 兒
你 可 愛 死 個 人 兒
小 胖 小 子 兒 胖 達 達
你 是 誰 家 的 愛 娃 娃
買 美 人 兒
買 美 人 兒
買 到 家 裏 作 個 看 家 的 人 兒
有 人 兒
沒 人 兒
不 用 鎖 門 兒

NOTES

喂 兒 ken² r, no recognized character exists

for this word which means, amusing, pleasant. These words are from a mother to her own boy. — 愛死 ai⁴ ssü³, to cause somebody to die of love. 胖達達 p'ang⁴ ta¹ ta¹, very fat and big; observe here ta¹ for ta². 愛娃娃 ai⁴ ua² ua², a beloved child. 美人兒 mei² jen² r, a beauty, said particularly of women, but here of the boy.

TRANSLATION

This fat boy of mine really amuses people! — you really make people die of love! — this fat boy of mine how big he is — (now, tell me) whose beloved child are you? — who wants to buy a beauty! who wants to buy a beauty! — when bought and taken home he may be employed in looking after the house — never mind whether there are other people or not — it will be quite ^{useless} to shut the door with a key. *any more (with her around)*.

CLVIII

高高山上一個牛
四個蹄子分八瓣兒
尾巴長在屁股後頭
腦袋長在脖子上頭

NOTES

瓣 pan⁴, the division of a hoof. The description

of this extraordinary ox will no doubt interest the reader.

TRANSLATION

On a very high mountain there is an ox — which has four hoofs and eight toes — his tail is grown under his rump — and his head is placed on his neck !

CLIX

買 一 包
還 有 你 們 開 一 包
大 爺 吃 了 愛 撈 跤
你 們 是 撈 私 跤
你 們 是 撈 官 跤
開 着 的 跛 脚 大 箍 腰

NOTES

These words are sung by children who want to imitate the itinerant vendors of a drug for professional wrestlers, which is called 壯藥 *chuang⁴ yao⁴*. It is made into black pills, called 百補增力丸 *puo² pu³ tseng¹ li⁴ uan²*, "the hundred times fortifying pills. 開 *nao⁴*, is not here in its original meaning but instead of 買 *mai³*, to buy; the expression is only used in Pekinese slang. 大爺 *ta⁴ ye²*, vulgar appellation for a gentleman whose name and titles

are unknown. 撙跤 *liao' chiao'*, to wrestle. 私跤 *ssu' chiao'*, wrestling among friends in a club (廠子 *ch'ang³-tzu*) where there is daily practice for private entertainment or with the view of entering by means of the examinations the Imperial wrestlers Corps, whose perfect and official wrestling-school is called 官跤 *kuan' chiao'*. 開着的 *k'ai' cho' ti*, all this verse is composed of technical wrestling terms; this one may possibly mean to give, to play a stroke, a move. 跛脚 *p'uo' chiao³*, to kick the adversary on the ankle in order to make him lose his balance and fall. 箍腰 *ku' yao'*, catching the adversary by the waist to throw him to the ground by sheer superiority of strength.

CLX

初 一 初 二 初 三 四 兒
 禿 媽 養 活 了 一 個 禿 寶 貝 兒
 吃 禿 嘍 兒
 抱 禿 八 兒
 禿 了 脖 梗 子
 禿 腦 袋 瓜 兒

NOTES

These verses are completely devoid of any sense.
 八兒 *pa'r*, name of the child.

TRANSLATION

On the first, on the second, on the third and on the fourth — the hairless mother has given birth to a hairless treasure — who sucks a hairless breast — she embraces the hairless young Pa — who has a hairless neck and a hairless head.

CLXI

你要奢 你要奢
你要包金的大耳挖
等着搖銅鼓兒的過來你去拏

NOTES

These words are said by mothers to little girls. The character 奢 is read here *sha²* which means in country dialect what? and is used instead of the Pekinese 甚麼 *shemmo³*. The first form is in Peking used only in mockery. 耳挖 *eur³ ua²*, an ear-pick. The women generally wear a silver one stuck in the hair above the left ear. Sometimes like other silver head-gears, it is gilt. 搖銅鼓兒的 *iao² t'ung² ku³ r ti*, a man who goes around in the street shaking a brass drum, and selling hair-pins, generally brass ones.

TRANSLATION

What do you want, what do you want? — you

want a big gilt ear-pick — wait till the man with the brass drum comes over and then go take it.

CLXII

鞭爆一响把張開
增福財神兩邊兒排
招財童子中間坐
增福仙增壽仙劉海兒本是海中仙
一撒金二撒銀
三撒騾馬成了羣
四撒搖錢樹
五撒聚寶盆
五子登科六六順

NOTES

This rhyme is sung by boys who go round on new-year's eve to wish good luck to the families in the neighbourhood and to get the gift of some cash. The style is not altogether *su-hua*. 鞭炮, *pien' p'ao'* "whip crackers" a sort of fire-crackers which sound like the cracking of a whip. 把張開 *pa' chang' k'ai'*, "people open their accounts" the shops which have been shut for three, four or more days at the festival of the New-year; choose a lucky day to reopen the shop and recommence business. This ceremony is performed with solemnity and with a number of fire-crackers in proportion to the

importance of the shop. 增福財神 *tseng¹ fu² ts'ai² shen²*, "the God of wealth who increases happiness" title of the divinity most respected by shopmen. 招財童子 *chao¹ ts'ai² t'ung² tzu³*. "the young man who attracts the wealth" another divinity whose image is pasted by shopmen on the shop door. All the following are also names of divinities. 增福仙 *tseng¹ fu² hsien¹*, the Genius who increases happiness. 增壽仙 *tseng¹ shou¹ hsien¹*, the Genius who lengthens one's age. 劉海兒 *liu² hai³ 'r*, name of a Genius supposed to bring wealth to his owner. He is represented wearing a neck lace of gold pieces. 成了羣 *ch'eng² la ch'ün²*, so many as to form a herd of them. 搖錢樹 *yao² ch'ien² shu¹*, a fabulous tree whose branches are covered with gold and silver, which falls down when one shakes the tree. 聚寶盆 *chü¹ pao³ p'en²*, a fabulous basin said to be possessed in former times by a certain 沈 *Shen³*; this basin had the useful quality of doubling the weight and value of the precious metal laid in it. 登科 *teng⁴ k'o¹*, to be approved at the official examinations. 六六順 *liu⁴ liu⁴ shun⁴*, six times six may you have favour (may you find every thing smooth for you).

TRANSLATION

Here is the first discharge of crackers and the shop begins to receive customers — on both sides is exhibited the God of wealth — and in the middle sits "the young man who attracts wealth — there

are also the Genius of happiness, the Genius of long life and Lui-hair who is originally a genius from the sea — first let him shower gold — secondly let him shower silver — thirdly let him give you as many horses and mules as would make herds of them — fourthly let him grant you the golden-tree — fifthly let him grant you the Treasure casket — five sons all of whom shall pass the examinations and a sixfold happiness.

CLXIII

天 皇 皇
地 皇 皇
我 家 有 個 夜 哭 郎
過 往 君 子 念 三 遍
一 家 睡 到 大 天 光

NOTES

This small rhyme is sung by mothers to get children asleep and to break the evil charm which forces them to be awake. The chinese paste on the walls of the town and even in places of which no mention need be made some words which, read three times, are thought to exert a very favourable influence on the events of the day as regards the reader. These spell sentences are generally called 咒語 *chou⁴ yü³* — (the word *chou⁴*, here is in a good

sense, whilst in other phrases it may mean “to read incantations and spells against some body” as in the phrase 咒罵 *chou¹ ma⁴*, which means to insult and to wish bad luck to one with ready made words). — One of the most common and powerful spells is contained in the first-two verses of this rhyme, as the words which compose them are considered the most honourable of all the characters. — This spell is jokingly composed as if it were intended to be pasted on walls, and not to be sung beside the cradles of babies. 夜哭郎 *ye⁴ k'u¹ lang²*, in nursery talk means a young gentleman who won't go to sleep.

TRANSLATION

Heaven is imperial! — The Earth is imperial — I have at home a young gentleman who weeps during the night — Let all the gentlemen who go by read these words three times — and all the family will sleep till broad daylight.

CLXIV

竈王爺
本姓張
一碗凉水三炷香
今年小子混的苦
明年再吃關東糖

NOTES

There are two gods of the hearth, the one is Li and is not married, the other has the surname of Chang and is married. These words are supposed to be uttered by a poor man who is performing the annual sacrifice to the God, but has not money enough to buy the sugar required for the occasion, and can only afford to prepare the bowl of water for the god's horse and three incense sticks. 小子 *hsiao³ tzu* "the young man" here jocularly used for I, the undermentioned. 混的 *hun' ti k'u³*, I am living very wretchedly.

TRANSLATION

O God of the hearth — whose surname is Chang — here is a bowl of water and three incense-sticks — this year I am living very miserably — next year you shall eat the Manchurian sugar.

CLXV

頭	遍	灰
還	進	斗
二	遍	灰
還	將	就
三	遍	灰
不	進	斗

拿 在 手
喃 在 口
看 你 進 斗 不 進 斗

NOTES

This rhyme is sung by boys in the street to insult opium smokers. The ways of poor opium smokers are described. These unhappy people when they have smoked the opium pill take the ashes 灰 *huei¹*, mix them up with saliva and make a new pill, which they place in the pipe-hole called 斗 *tou³*. This operation of forming a new ball with the ashes is repeated as often as three times, after which the ash of the opium loses all taste whatever. 頭遍 *t'ou² pien⁴*, the first time. 將就 *chiang¹ chiu⁴*, tolerably good, it can be used. 不進斗 *pu⁴ chin¹ tou³*, it means "that the ashes are no longer any good, they cannot again be pressed together to form a pill, and therefore they cannot be smoked; so they do not enter the bowl of the pipe. 喃 this character is read *an³* and *nan³*, and means to place something in the palm of the hand and raise it to the mouth; also to stoop down to catch hold of something with the mouth. The opium smokers chew the opium ash when it cannot be smoked any more.

TRANSLATION

The first time the ashes — may enter the bowl

of the pipe the second time — it is not so good — and the third time — they cannot be used — then the man rolls the ashes in his hands — and raises them to his mouth — let us see if this time they can enter this (new) pipe mouth.

CLXVI

年 年 有 個 三 月 三
王 母 娘 娘 慶 壽 誕
各 洞 神 仙 來 上 壽
蟠 桃 美 酒 會 羣 仙

NOTES

The third day in the third moon is the birthday of Hsi'-uang² mu³, the western Royal Mother, worshipped by the Chinese. 洞神 tung⁴ shen², the Spirits are supposed to live in grottoes. 蟠桃 p'an² t'ao² flat peaches. 蟠桃會 p'an² t'ao² huei⁴, is also called the festival in honour of Hsi-uang²-mu³, Every spirit in attendance is supposed to be presented with a peach. See the play called P'an-t'ao-huei. 羣仙 ch'ün² hsien¹, to assemble the spirits.

TRANSLATION

Every year there is the festival of the 3^d day of the third moon — it is the Birthday of the Royal Mother — All the spirits in the grottoes come to

assist at the ceremony — the flat peaches and the good wine can make the spirits assemble.

CLXVII

南 京 大 柳 樹
北 京 沈 萬 三
滄 州 的 獅 子 景 州 的 塔
深 州 蜜 桃 楨 口 兒 甜

NOTES

In this rhyme are collected some of the rarities to be seen in the Empire. 沈 萬 三 *Shen³ uan¹ san¹*, name of the propieter of that famous treasure-basin 聚寶盆 *chü⁴ pao³ p'en²* which has been spoken of before. 滄 州 *Ts'ang¹ chow¹*, in the Tientsin prefecture. It is stated there is an iron lion, in the interior of which there is room for ten men. 景 州 塔 *ching³ chou¹ t'a³*, a high pagoda in Ching-chow, in the Chihli province; it is stated it is very high and may be seen at the distance of fifty *li*. 深 州 *Shen¹ chow¹*, a place renowned for its magnificent peaches. 楨 口 兒 甜 *kang⁴ k'ou³ r' t'ien²*, so sweet that they fill the mouth; the same idea is also expressed by 殺 口 兒 甜 *sha¹ k'ou³ r' t'ien²*.

TRANSLATION

The willow trees in Nanking — The man Shen-uansan in Peking — the lion in Ts'ang-chow, and

the pagoda in Ching-chow — and the very sweet peaches in Shen-chow.

CLXVIII

轂洞洞
太平車
裏頭坐着個俏哥哥
城外去聽野台兒戲
回頭逛個十里河兒
老爺廟鬧吵吵
人海人山真熱鬧
村兒裏的姑娘來賣俏
臉搽官粉賽過一個大白瓢

NOTES

轂洞洞 *ku¹ tung¹ tung¹*, a slang surname for a sort of travelling cart covered with a mat awning—a better name for it is 太平車 *t'ai¹ p'ing² ch'o¹*. 野台兒戲 *ye³ t'ai² 'r hsi⁴*, performances on wooden stages in the country, the expense of which is paid for by means of general contributions amongst the peasants. 十里河兒 *shih² li³ ho² 'r*, “the ten *li* river” a brook outside the Kiang-tso-men in Peking. By its side there is a large temple in which a festival is held on the 24th of the 6th moon: its name is 老爺廟 *Lao³ ye² miao⁴*. 鬧吵吵 *nao⁴ ch'ao¹ ch'ao¹*, great noise and hubbub. 人海人山 *jen² hai³ jen² shan¹*,

the men were there as thick as water and as high as hills. 賣俏 *mai' ch'iao'*, "to sell attractions" means "to make a display" to show off. The comparison of the girls' head with the white calabash is made in mockery.

TRANSLATION

In the awning-cart — there sits a nice fellow — he is going outside the town to hear the village comedies — and then he will go down to the River of ten *li* — In the Lao-ye temple there is great confusion — the crowd is enormous, and it is very animated — the girls from the villages come here to display their charms — and their faces rubbed with white cosmetics look just like white gourds.

CLXIX

壽	星	老	兒	福	祿	星
增	福	增	壽	壽	長	生
生	文	生	武	生	貴	子
子	孝	孫	賢	輩	輩	兒 榮

NOTES

— This rhyme is sung by children on birthdays. The three happy stars are the 壽星 *shou' hsing'*, the star of longevity, 福星 *fu' hsing'*, the star of happiness and 祿星 *lu' hsing'*, the star of appointment.

The spirit which presides over longevity is called
壽星老兒 *shou' hsing' lao' 'r*.

TRANSLATION

The spirit of longevity, and the stars of happiness and appointment — may they increase your happiness and your longevity so that you may live a long life — and have sons in the literary career, in the military career and in high positions — may your sons be pious and your grandsons be for ever glorious.

CLXX

小 胖 哥
玩 藝 兒 多
搬 不 倒 兒
婆 婆 車
風 颳 燕 兒 一 大 串 兒
冰 糖 葫 蘆 兒 是 果 餡 兒

NOTES

搬 不 倒 兒 *pan' pu' tao' 'r*, a toy consisting of a round ball of clay on which is stuck a paper man — the plaything is so made that in whatever position one puts it, by the law of gravity it takes again its upright position. 婆 婆 車 *p'uo' p'uo' ch'o'*, ladies carriage, another toy. 風 颳 燕 兒 *feng' kua' yen' 'r*,

another plaything in the form of a stick on which a thread is tied, not unlike a fiddestick. On this thread are fixed many paper flowers, which at the least breath of wind begin to revolve causing a peculiar whirring round. 冰糖葫蘆 ping¹ t'ang² hu² lu², some fruits as the hai-t'ang are strung together by a thin stick and covered with sugar; this is called a "sugar-gourd".

TRANSLATION

This fat boy — has many toys — a clay puppet — and a small cart — and a great string of paper flowers — and sugar-gourds stuffed with fruits.



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